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A Preservative against Popery, &c.

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A
Preservative
AGAINST
POPERY:

Being some Plain
DIRECTIONS
TO
Unlearned **PROTESTANTS,**
How to Dispute with
Romish Priests.

The First PART.

By *WILLIAM SHERLOCK*, D. D.
Master of the *Temple*.

The Fourth Edition.

L O N D O N :
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A
PRESERVATIVE
AGAINST
POPERY.

The Introduction.

WHile so many Learned Pens are employed to such excellent purpose, in answering the Writings, and confuting the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome, I cannot but think it a very useful Work to give some plain Directions to those, who are Unlearned, who have neither Time to Read, nor Money to Buy, nor Abilities to Understand more Learned Controversies. Our Divines indeed have taken great care to write short Tracts, with great Plainness and Perspicuity, and with as little unnecessary shew of Learning as may be, to fit them the better for Unlearned Readers; and they have had, by the blessing of God, wonderful Success; Popery was never so generally understood, as it is at this day: the meanest Tradesmen can now dispute against Popery with sufficient Skill and Judgment, and need not be beholding to the prejudices of Education to secure them: and therefore my business shall not be at present down-right to State any one Controversie be-

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A Preservative against POPERY.

tween us, and the Church of Rome, but to direct our People how to secure themselves against the Attacks of our Roman Adversaries, to check their conferring and disputing Humour, or to baffle them. I shall reduce all into as plain a Method and as short a Compass as I can, and shew,

First, How to stop them at the beginning of their Dispute.

Secondly, Give some Rules about the Topicks, from which they Dispute, such as Reason, Scripture, and the Authority of the Ancient Fathers and Writers of the Church.

*Thirdly, How to Answer some of their most popular Pre-
tences, such as the Uncertainty of the Protestant Religion,
the Mis-representations of Popery, &c.*

Fourthly, To give some short Directions as to particular Controversies.

C H A P. I.

How Protestants may prevent Disputing with Papists.

NOW I do not by this mean, that they should always avoid their Company, and run away from them where-ever they meet them, which is very ill Manners; though it is not adviseable neither to court such Acquaintance, or to make them our intimates, when neither the Obligations of Nature, nor other Civil or Political Reasons make it necessary; for Conversation many times prevails more than Arguments can do, and will as soon corrupt Mens Faith, as Manners.

Nor do I mean; that Protestants should obstinately refuse to Discourse with Papists when they meet them; to
hear

A Preservative against POPERY.

3

hear what they have to say for themselves, and to give a Reason for their own Faith; this is not agreeable to Protestant Principles, To prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good: and yet this ought to be done with great prudence and caution too; for there are a sort of perverse Disputers, who are to be avoided according to the Apostolick Precept, *If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strife of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising, perverse disputing of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing, that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thy self,* 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

Men of weak Judgments, and who are not skilled in the Laws of Disputation, may easily be imposed on by cunning Sophisters, and such as lie in wait to Deceive: The Church of Rome is very sensible of this, and therefore will not suffer her People to dispute their Religion, or to read Heretical Books, nay not so much as to look into the Bible it self; but though we allow all this to our People, as that which God not only allows, but requires, and which all considering Men will allow themselves, whoever forbids it; yet we do not allow them to be perpetual Seekers, to be always doubtful of their Religion, to be like *children tossed too and fro with every wind of Doctrine*. And therefore the liberty of Judging and Inquiring, which we allow, is only that they may understand the true Reasons of their Faith, and be well grounded in it, which men may be, who are not able to answer every cavilling Objection; but it is an abuse of this liberty, when men have itching Ears, and hearken after all Novelties of Opinions, and grow wanton and sceptical Disputers; and therefore it is very consistent with that liber-

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

ty, which Protestants allow, to advise Christians to be very careful how they hearken to such as Preach any new Doctrine, which they have not been taught; that the weak in Faith and Knowledge should not venture upon doubtful Disputations; that they should not be hasty to question what they have believed, nor to give heed to new Doctrines; that they should not rely on their own understanding in these matters, but when they meet with any difficulties, should consult their Spiritual Guides, not to be finally determined by their Authority, as the Church of *Rome* requires, but to hear their Reasons, and what Answers they can give to such difficulties, as they themselves cannot answer. With such Cautions as these, we dare venture our People to hear, and read, and enquire, as much as they please, and have not found yet, that our *Roman* Adversaries have been able to make any great impression upon such honest and prudent Inquirers. But that which I intend at present, is of another nature, to teach our People a Way to make these men sick of Disputing themselves, to make them leave off those Impertinent and Noisie Squabbles, with which they disturb all Company they come into: and this is no such mighty Secret neither, as may be expected, but is very plain and obvious at the first proposal.

For when you are assaulted by such troublesome Disputers, only ask them, Whether they will allow you to Judge for your selves in matters of Religion? if they will not, why do they trouble you with Disputing? for the end of Disputing, is to convince; and you cannot be convinced, unless you may Judge too. Would they dispute with a Stone, that can neither hear, nor understand? or would they make a Speech to convince a Horse, that he is out of his way, and must take another Road, if he would return home? And do not they talk to as little purpose, and

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

5

and spend their breath as vain upon a man, who can hear indeed, and understand somewhat, but must not follow his own understanding? If they say, that you must Judge for your selves; ask them, Whether this be the Doctrine of their Church, that private men may Judge for themselves? Whether this do not resolve our Faith into a private Spirit, which they say, is the Protestant Heresie, and the Foundation of Protestant Uncertainty? If they once open this Gap to Hereticks into the Church, there is great danger that more will run out at it, than will come in; and it well if the Church it self stays behind: for what becomes of the Church of *Rome*, if all their glorious Cant of the Infallibility of Church, and Popes, and General Councils, be at last resolved into a private Spirit! While these men go about to dispute Hereticks into their Church, they unavoidably give up the Cause of the Church, and of Infallibility; which is the way to dispute a great many good Catholicks out of it, who are kept there only by the power of a blind and implicate Faith. Here then let our Protestant fix his foot, and not stir an inch, till they disown Infallibility, and confess, that every man can and must Judge for himself in matters of Religion, according to the Proofs that are offered to him. For will a wise man dispute with one, who he knows banterers him all the while? who appeals to his private Judgment (as all men do, who dispute with one another) and at the same time cries down this private Spirit as the cause of Schisms, and Heresies, and Blasphemies, and every thing that is evil: no man of any Spirit, but will scorn to dispute with one who intends only to put a trick on him, and to out-wit him if he can; and in truth it is no more to endeavour to dispute a man into Popery, when the Fundamental Principle of Popery is, That we must not Reason and Dispute, but Believe; but we must take
our

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

our Faith upon the Authority of the Church, without asking any questions about it. There are two or three things, which may be answered to this.

I. That though Disputing be not a proper way for Papists to take, yet it is the only way, that can be taken with Protestants, who are all for Disputing, and will believe nothing without a Reason; and therefore Protestants ought not to blame Papists for Disputing, unless they would be good Catholicks without it. Now in answer to this, I have something to say to Papists, and something to Protestants.

1. As for the Papists, what necessity soever they be in of Disputing, I desire to know, with what face they can reproach Protestants with adhering to their own private Judgments, when they themselves are such zealous Disputants, which is an Appeal to every private mans Judgment: If ever they make any Converts, they must be beholden to mens private Judgments for it, for I think men cannot change their Opinions, without exercising a private Judgment about it; and I suppose when they dispute with men to make them Papists, they intend to convert them by their own private Judgments. Now what difference is there between mens using their private Judgments to turn Papists, or to turn Protestants? One indeed may be false, and the other true; but private Judgment is private Judgment still: and if it be so great a fault for men to use their own private Judgments, it is as great a fault in a Papist, as it is in a Protestant. So that at least, as to Converts, the Church of *Rome* has no advantage in this particular over Protestant Churches; some by the exercise of their own Reason and Judgment, go over to the Church of *Rome*, and some to the Church of *England*; some disputed into Popery, and some into Protestantism: and therefore for the sake of their beloved Con-

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

7

Converts, and their beloved Disputations, they ought to be more favourable to a private Spirit: The truth is, by disputing with Hereticks, they give up their Cause, and confess, that in all Disputes of Religion, their lies an Appeal to every mans private Judgment and Conscience; and should they lose this Point by their Disputing, all the Converts they make, cannot recompence such a loss.

2. As for Protestants, though they have no other way to satisfy themselves, or to convince others, but by Reason and Discourse; yet this is no reason why they should Dispute with those men who disown the Judgment of Reason, as a private Spirit: For why should I Dispute with any man who uses such Arguments to convince me, as he himself does not think a sufficient Reason of Faith? Ask then one of these Disputers, who alleges Scripture, Reason and Antiquity, to prove any Doctrines of the *Romish* Faith, Do you, Sir, believe Transubstantiation, the Worship of Images, the Invocation of Saints, Purgatory, Mass for the Dead, upon the bare Authority of these Scriptures and Fathers, you have produced for them? if these Doctrines were not Defined by the Church, should you think these Arguments sufficient to prove them? or could you suppose, the Church had Defined the contrary, should you think the Arguments good still? In short, can any Reason, any Authority of Scripture, or Fathers, be any Foundation for a Divine Faith, but only the Authority of the Church? He that says they can, is no Papist; and he that says they cannot, confesses, that he uses such Arguments, as he himself does not build his Faith upon: If you will believe them; you may; but though you do, you are no sound Believer, without resolving your Faith solely into the Authority of the Church. And, I think, he must love Dispu-

Disputing well, who will dispute with such men as these; and those must have a good degree of Assurance, who will be troublesome with their Disputes, after such a discovery. The end of Disputing, I suppose, is either to convince, or to be convinced: but should you answer and baffle all such a man's Arguments, if he be modest, it may be he may blush a little, but is not to be moved; for his Faith, after all, is not built upon these Arguments, but upon Church-Authority: and it is to no purpose for you to suffer your self to be convinced by these Arguments, for it will not make you a good Catholick, without resolving your Faith wholly into the Authority of the Church. It is certainly a very surprizing thing for a Protestant to be disputed into Popery; for as soon as he is converted, he must renounce the very means of his Conversion: He must use his own Judgment, to turn Papist, and as soon as he is turned, he must renounce his own Judgment, and confess it to be of no Authority: Now though it may be such a private Judgment as leads a man to Popery, may as well deserve to be renounced, as any; yet it is an odd kind of contradiction, to renounce our own private Reason and Judgment, and yet to own our Conversion; methinks such men should renounce their Conversion too at the same time they renounce their Reason; for if their Conversion be good, it is a sign their Judgment was so; but if their Judgment be not fit to be trusted, methinks this should make them question their Conversion: And therefore they should either maintain the Reputation of their Judgment and Conversion together, and then they cannot be good Catholicks, while they adhere to their own Judgment, or they should renounce them both together; nay, they must not only renounce their own Judgments, as soon as they are converted, but they must renounce the Authority and

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A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

Validity of those very Arguments whereby they are Converted, whether from Scripture, Reason, or Fathers; they must confess, that these Arguments are not a sufficient Foundation for a Divine Faith, without the Authority of the Church; for it is a dangerous thing to allow any Authority to Scripture or Fathers, without the Church, for that may make men Hereticks; and yet, I suppose, when Hereticks are converted by these Arguments, it must be the force of the Arguments, and not the Authority of the Church, which converts them, unless they believed the Authority of the Church before they were converted, and that was a little too early for it. Now methinks when Protestants turn Papists, as they pretend, from the conviction of their own Reason and Judgment, and as soon as they are converted, are taught, that there is no relying upon their own Judgment, and that the Reasons whereby they were converted, are not good in themselves without Church Authority; if it were possible for them ever to use their Reason more after such a Change, it would certainly make them disown their Conversion; which, it seems, was the effect of a very fallible Judgment, and very uncertain and inauthentic Reason.

II. There is another pretence for these Disputes, which may seem to answer this difficulty, that the intention of these Disputes, is only to lead you to the Infallible Church, and set you upon a Rock; and then it is very natural to renounce your own Judgment, when you have an infallible Guide. Our own Judgment then must bring us to the infallible Guide, and when we have found him, we have no farther use for our own Judgment. I answer,

I. Should we grant this, it puts an end to all the particular Disputes of Religion between us and the Church

A Preservative against P O P E R T.

of Rome: We may dispute on about an Infallible Judge, but they cannot, with any sence, dispute with us about the particular Articles of Faith, such as Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Worship of Images, and the like; for these are to be learnt onely from the Church, and cannot be proved by Scripture or Fathers without the Authority of the Church. And if they would confess this, they would save us, and themselves, a great deal of trouble: For why should they be at the trouble of writing such Arguments, or we to answer them, when they themselves confess, that the Arguments are not good, unless they be confirmed by the Churches Authority? I confess, I have often wondered to see such Volumes of Controversies written by the *Roman* Divines, for I could never imagine to what end they are writ. Is not their Faith wholly resolved into the Authority of the Church? what need Reasons and Arguments then, which cannot work Faith in us? Either these Arguments are sufficient to confirm the Articles of their Faith without the Authority of the Church, or they are not: If they are, then there is no need of Infallibility, since all the Articles of Faith are confirmed by such Reasons, as are a sufficient Foundation for Faith without it: And thus they give up all their Arguments for an Infallible Judge, from the necessity of such a Judge. If they be not, of what use are they? does the Decision of the Church need to be confirmed by such Arguments? If they are not good Arguments without the Authority of the Church, they can no more give Authority to the Church, than an Infallible Church can want any Authority, but its own: Are they to convince Hereticks? But how if Hereticks should confute them? If they be not in themselves good Arguments, they may be confuted; and they know, by sad experience, that there are Hereticks,

ticks, as they call them, who have Wit and Learning enough to confute, what is to be confuted; and if they fall into such hands (which has been their hard fate of late) they are sure to be confuted; and, I doubt then, they had better have let them alone; for the Catholick Cause may suffer much in the Opinion of the World, when all their Arguments are confuted: All then that they can design by such Arguments, is to impose upon the Weak and Ignorant, when Learned Men are out of the way, which is no very commendable design; and that design will be spoiled too, if Unlearned Men do but learn to ask them the Question, Whether they build their Faith upon such Arguments? For then they must either quit the Authority of their Church, or the strength of their Arguments: The first reduces them to Protestant Uncertainty, for then they have no other Foundation for their Faith than Protestants have; which resolves it self into the Reasons and Arguments of Faith: The second puts an end to Disputing about these matters; for no man needs answer any Arguments, which the Disputant himself acknowledges not to be good.

2. There is nothing then left for Disputation, and the Exercise of our private Reason and Judgment, but the inquiry after an Infallible Judge. And here also, before you Dispute, it will be necessary to ask them, Whether the belief of an Infallible Judge, must be resolved into every mans private Judgment? whether it be not necessary to believe this with a Divine Faith? and whether there can be any Divine Faith without an Infallible Judge? Certainly if ever it be necessary to have an Infallible Faith, it is so to be infallibly assured of an Infallible Judge, because this is the foundation of all the rest: for though the Judge be Infallible, if I be not infallibly assured of this, I can never arrive to Infallibility in any thing: for

I cannot be more certain, that his Determinations are Infallible, than I am, that he himself is Infallible; and if I have but a Moral assurance of this, I can be but morally assured of the rest; for the Building cannot be more firm than the Foundation is: and thus there is an end to all the *Roman* Pretences to Infallibility. Now if we must believe the Infallibility of the Church, or Pope of *Rome*, with an infallible Faith, there is an end of Disputing; for no Reasons or Arguments, not the Authority of the Scripture it self, without an infallible Judge, can beget an infallible Faith, according to the *Roman* Doctors: For this reason they charge the Protestant Faith with Uncertainty, and will not allow it to be a Divine, but Humane Faith, though it is built upon the firmest Reasons, the best Authority, and the most express Scripture that can be had for any thing; but because we do not pretend to rely on the Authority of a Living Infallible Judge, therefore, forsooth, our Faith is Uncertain, Humane, and Fallible: and this, they say, makes an Infallible Judge necessary, because without him we have no Infallible Certainty of any thing.

Now if nothing but an Infallible Judge can be the Foundation of an Infallible Faith, then it is to no purpose to dispute about such a Judge; for Disputing is nothing else but weighing Reason against Reason, and Argument against Argument, or Scripture against the pretence of Scripture; but whoever gets the better of it this way, no Reasons, or Arguments, or Scripture-proofs can beget an Infallible Certainty, which is necessary in this case; and therefore this is all lost labour, and they do but put a trick upon you, when they pretend to dispute you into the belief of an Infallible Judge; for they themselves know, and must confess, if you ask them, that the best and most convincing Arguments cannot give us an Infallible

lible assurance of this matter ; and yet unless we are infallibly assured of an Infallible Judge, it is all to no purpose.

3. I can think but of one thing more, that can be said in this Cause, *viz.* that it is manifestly unreasonable, not to grant to the Church of *Rome*, that liberty which all men and Churches challenge, to Dispute for themselves, and against their Adversaries : for when two men, or two Churches differ in matters of *Faith*, there is no other way to end the Controversie, but by disputing it out ; whereas this Discourse will not allow them to dispute, nor any Protestants to dispute with them.

In answer to this, I grant, that the Charge is in a great measure true, and shews the absurdity of that Church and Religion, but does not disprove the reasonableness of this method. If men will embrace such a Religion as will not admit of disputing, it is their own and their Religion's fault, not the fault of those men who will not dispute with them. Now a Religion which leaves no room for the exercise of Reason and private Judgment, leaves no place for Disputes neither ; for how shall men dispute, who must not use their own Reason and Judgment ? They ought not to dispute themselves, if they be true to their own Principles ; and no man ought to dispute with them, who will not be laugh'd at by them, and by all the World : For to dispute without Reason, is a new way of disputing, (though it is the only thing that can justify the Romanists, and our late Disputants have been very careful to observe it ;) and to dispute with Reason, is to use our private Reason in Religion, which is Protestant Hérésie. Infallible men ought not to dispute, for that is to quit their Infallibility ; and fallible men are very unwise to dispute with them, because no good can come of it : for Reason can never

A Preservative against POPERY.

never confute their infallible Adversaries, nor make themselves infallible Believers.

But for the better understanding of this, I have two things to say. 1. That Papists may Dispute against Protestant Heresies, as they call them, but cannot dispute for their own Religion. 2. Protestants may dispute against Popish Doctrines, and to vindicate their own Faith, but cannot reasonably be disputed into Popery.

1. That Papists may dispute against Protestant Heresies, but cannot dispute for their own Religion: And the reason of this difference is plain, because Protestants allow of Reason and Discourse in matters of Religion; and therefore they may be confuted, if good Reasons can be produced against them: And here the Romanists may try their skill; but the Religion of *Rome* is not founded on Reason, but on Infallibility; and therefore is not the subject of a Dispute, because the truth and certainty of those Doctrines, is not resolved into the Reasons of them. They ought to alledge no other ground of their Faith, but the Infallibility of the Church; and they ought not to dispute about this neither: but those who will believe it may, and those who won't, may let it alone, because Infallibility is not to be proved by Reason; for Reason proves nothing infallibly, and therefore cannot give us an infallible certainty of the Churches Infallibility.

But you will say, if they have other Arguments for the truth of their Faith, besides the Infallibility of the Church, why may they not urge those other Reasons and Arguments to convince those, who will not own the Churches Infallibility? I answer, Because whatever other Reasons they have, their Faith is not resolved into them; and therefore it is not honest in them to urge those

those for the Reasons of their Faith, which are not the Reasons why they believed: For let me ask them, Suppose they may have very good Reasons for some of their Doctrines, do they believe them meerly because they are reasonable? If they say they do; then they believe just as Protestants believe; and there is no need of Infallibility, when men believe nothing but what is reasonable; and it is pity that so good a thing as Infallibility should serve onely to support an unreasonable Faith.

Let me ask them again, Can they have a sufficient certainty, that these Reasons are good, without an infallible Judge? If they can, then the Faith of Protestants, which is grounded upon rational Evidences, may be very certain too, though it be not infallible; if they cannot, then their Reasons are none, since the very certainty of them is resolved into an infallible Authority; and therefore they are no certain Reasons, that is, not such as a man may rely on, when they are separated from Infallibility; and consequently they ought never to be urged apart from Infallibility, because they themselves do not think them good Reasons, that is, not a sufficient Foundation of Faith alone; and then I know not why they should be urged at all; for Infallibility can stand by it self, without the support of any Reasons.

I ask them again, would they reject those Doctrines which they think they can prove by such evident Reasons; did they see those Reasons as evidently confuted? If they would not, then it is plain, they do not believe them for the sake of those Reasons; for if they did, they would reject them, when all their Reasons were confuted; They only impose upon the World with a pretence and flourish of Reason, and set up a Man of Straw for Protestants to shoot at; but whatever becomes

comes of their Reasons, they have a safe Retreat into Infallibility.

If they believed any Doctrine because it is reasonable, if they will be true to themselves, they ought to reject all Doctrines, which are unreasonable, or contrary to Sense and Reason: He who believes for the sake of Reason, can never believe against it: for if Reason makes a thing credible, then what is unreasonable is incredible too; and we may as reasonably dis-believe what is confirmed by Reason, as believe what Reason contradicts: and therefore it is not very modest to hear men talk of Reason in any case; who can believe such an absurd and unreasonable Doctrine as Transubstantiation.

Now whatever Opinion Protestants have of Reason, Papists ought not to pretend to it, because their Faith has nothing to do with Reason; it is a Reproach to an infallible Church and infallible Faith, to need the supports of Reasons. And the truth is, those who will have nothing to do with Reason, Reason commonly has as little to do with them, but owes them a Shame, whenever they pretend to her; and therefore they had as good let her alone.

2. Protestants may dispute against Popish Doctrines, and to vindicate their own Faith, but they cannot reasonably be disputed into Popery. When Papists alledge Scripture, Reason, or humane Authority for any Doctrines of their Religion, Protestants, who allow of the use of Reason in Religion, may examine and confute them: when Papists dispute against Protestant Doctrines, Protestants are concerned to vindicate their own Faith, or to renounce it; but if a Protestant understands himself and his own Principles, all the Disputes in the World can never make him a Papist. For to be a Papist, does not signify merely to believe Transubstantiation,

tion, or the Worship of Saints and Images, and such-like Popish Doctrines; but to resolve our Faith into the Infallible Authority of the Church, and to believe whatever the Church believes, and for no other reason, but because the Church teaches it. This is the peculiar and distinguishing Character of the Church of *Rome*, which divides it from all other Churches and Sects of Christians; and therefore our late Popish Writers are certainly in the right, to endeavour to bring the whole Controversie to this issue; not to dispute about particular Doctrines, which follow on course, when once you believe the Church to be Infallible; but to persuade men that the Church is Infallible, and that the Church of *Rome* is that Infallible Church. Now I say, no understanding Protestant can be disputed into this kind of Popery, and that for two plain Reasons. 1. Because no Arguments or Disputations can give me an infallible certainty of the Infallibility of the Church. 2. Because it is impossible by Reason to prove, that men must not use their own Reason and Judgment in matters of Religion.

1. No Arguments can give me an infallible certainty of the Infallibility of the Church. The great Motive to any man to forsake the other Communions of Christians, and to go over to the Church of *Rome*, is to attain an Infallibility in Faith, which is a wonderful good thing, if it were to be had; but though the Church of *Rome* were Infallible, and I should be convinced that there were some reason to think so, yet unless I can be infallibly assured of it, my Faith is still as fallible as the Protestant Faith is; and I am no nearer to Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, than in the Church of *England*. For as I observed before, unless I can have an infallible certainty of the Infallibility of the Church, I can have no Infallibility at all: Though the Church were infal-

ible in all her Decrees, I can never be infallibly certain of the truth of her Decrees, unless I be infallibly certain that she is infallible. It is a known Rule in Logic, that the Conclusion must follow the weaker part, and therefore it is impossible to infer an infallible Faith from the fallible Belief of the Churches Infallibility.

And yet the best Reasons in the World (which is all that disputing can do, to offer Reasons for our Faith) cannot give us an infallible certainty, because Reason itself is not an infallible Principle, at least the Church of *Rome* dares not own, that any mans private Reason and Judgment is infallible; for then Protestants may set up for Infallibility as well as Papists. No man, by Reason and Argument, can arrive at a greater Certainty than Protestants may have, and yet no man can arrive at greater certainty in the way of disputing, than Reason and Argument can give him; and then a Popish Convert, who is reasoned into the belief of Infallibility, though he has changed his Opinion, yet has no more Infallibility now, than he had when he was a Protestant. Protestants, without an Infallible Church, may have all the Certainty that Reason and Argument can give them; and a Convert has no greater Certainty (if he have no more than what Disputing could give him) for his Infallible Church: And how is it possible then, that a reasonable man can be disputed out of the Church of *England* into the Church of *Rome*, upon such vain hopes of a more infallible certainty? for let him go where he will, if he be lead to *Rome* it self by his own fallible Reason and Judgment, (which is the only Guide he has in disputing) he will be the same fallible Creature that ever he was. But to represent this the more familiarly, let us hear a short Conference between a sturdy Protestant, and a new Convert.

Prot.

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

19

Prot. O, my old Friend! I am glad to meet you, for I have longed to know what change you find in your self, since you are become an Infallible Believer.

Conv. I find, Sir, what I expected, very great ease and satisfaction of mind, since I am delivered from all doubtful Disputes in such an important concernment as the Salvation of my Soul, and have a firm and sure Rock to trust to, such an Infallible Church as cannot err it self; nor mis-guide me.

Prot. This, I confess, is a very great advantage; and therefore as we have been formerly of the same Church and Communion, I would be glad to keep you company also in so advantageous a change. Pray therefore tell me, how you came to be so infallibly perswaded of the Infallibility of your Church.

Conv. With all my heart; and I shall be very glad of such company: and indeed there are such powerful Reasons for it, as I am sure must convince so free and ingenuous a mind, as you always carry about with you. For Christ has promised to build his Church upon St. *Peter*, and that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it----

Prot. Hold, good Sir! Reason! Are you got no farther than Reason yet? Will Reason ever make a man infallible? I have considered all the Reasons that are used to this purpose, and know what to say to them, if that were our business; and the truth is, I have a great deal of unanswerable Reason, to stay where I am; and am a little surprized, to think that you, or any man, should leave the Church of *England* for want of Reason, or go to the Church of *Rome* for it: and therefore pray tell me the Secret, for there must be something else to make Converts, besides Reason.

Conv. Then I perceive you take me for a Knave, who

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

have changed my Religion for base secular Ends, without Reason.

Prot. You know that best; but that was not my meaning: but the reason of my Question was, because you changed for an infallible Faith. Now if you rely still upon Reason, I don't see how your Faith is more infallible than mine: for I am as confident, as you can be, that I have as good Reasons for my Faith, and in my opinion much better, than you have for yours.

Conv. I beg your pardon for that: I rely upon the Authority of an Infallible Church, you trust to your private Reason.

Prot. And I beg your pardon, Sir: for I rely on the Authority of Scripture, which is as infallible as your Church.

Conv. But you rely on your own Reason for the Authority of Scripture, and those particular Doctrines you draw from it.

Prot. And you rely on your own Reason and Judgment, for the Infallibility of your Church, and consequently of all the Doctrines of it; and therefore your infallible Faith is as much resolved into your own fallible Judgment, as the Protestant Faith is: so that the difference between us is not, that your Faith is infallible, and ours fallible; for they are both alike, call it what you will, fallible or infallible; but the Dispute is, whether your Reason and Judgment, or ours, be best: and therefore if you think your Reason better than ours, you did well to change; but if you changed your Church, hoping to grow more infallible by it, you were miserably mistaken, and may return to us again: for we have more rational Certainty than you have, and you have no more infallible Certainty than we. You think you are reasonably assured that your Church is infallible, and then

then you take up your Religion upon trust from your Church, without, and many times against Sense and Reason, according as it happens; so that you have onely a general assurance of the Infallibility of your Church, and that no greater than Protestants pretend to in other cases; viz. the certainty of Reason and Argument; but have not so much as a rational assurance of the truth of your particular Doctrines; that if you be mistaken about the Infallibility of your Church, you must be miserably mistaken about every thing else, which you have no other evidence for. But now we are in general assured, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and in particular are assured, that the Faith, which we profess, is agreeable to Scripture, or expressly contained in it, and does not contradict either Sense or Reason, or any other Principle of Knowledge. So that we have as much assurance of every Article of our Faith, as you have of the Infallibility of your Church; and therefore have at least double and treble the assurance that you have. But if you know the Reasons of your Conversion, I desire to know of you, What made you think, that you wanted Certainty in the Church of *England*?

Conv. Because with you every man is left to his own private Reason and Judgment, the effects of which, are very visible in that infinite variety of Sects among you, which shews what an uncertain thing your Reason is, that so few judge alike of the power and validity of the same Reasons.

Prot. And were you not sensible at the same time, that you were left to your own Reason and Judgment, when you turned Papist? Are you not sensible, that men do as little agree about your Reasons for Infallibility, as they do about any Protestant Reasons? Do not I know the Reasons alledged by you for the Infallibility of your

your Church as well as you do: And do we not still differ about them? And is not this as much an Argument of the uncertainty of those Reasons, which make you a Papist, that they cannot make me a Papist, as the dissent of Protestants in other matters, is of the uncertainty of their Reasons? Could you indeed be infallibly assured of the Infallibility of your Church, I grant you would have the advantage of us, but while you found your belief of Infallibility upon such an uncertain Principle, as you think Reason is; if Certainty had been your onely aim, you might as well have continued in the Church of *England*, as have gone over to *Rome*.

This abundantly shews what a ridiculous thing it is for a Protestant to be disputed out of his Church and Religion, upon a pretence of more infallible Certainty in the Church of *Rome*: Were they indeed inspired with an infallible assurance, that the Church of *Rome* is Infallible, there might be some pretence for this; but an Infallibility which has no better foundation than mens private Reason, and private Judgment, is no Infallibility, but has all the same uncertainties, which they charge on the Protestant Faith, and a great deal more, because it is not founded upon such great and certain Reasons.

The plain truth is, men may be taught from their Infancy to believe the Church Infallible, and when they are grown up, may take it, without examination, for a first and self-evident Principle, and think this an infallible Faith: but men who understand the difference between the evidence of Reason and Infallibility, can never found an infallible Faith on Reason, nor think that a man who is reasoned into the belief of the Infallibility of the Church, is more infallible in his Faith, than a Protestant is: And such a man will see no reason to quit the Church of *England*, for the sake of an infallible Faith; for though they

they had an infallible Guide, yet Reason cannot give them an infallible assurance of it, but can rise no higher at most than a Protestant certainty.

2. It is impossible also by Reason to prove, that men must not use their own Reason and Judgment in matters of Religion. If any man should attempt to persuade you of this, ask him, why then he goes about to dispute with you about Religion? whether men can dispute without using their own Reason and Judgment? whether they can be convinced without it? whether his offering to dispute with you against the use of your Reason, does not prove him ridiculous and absurd? For if you must not use your Reason, why does he appeal to your Reason? And whether you should not be as ridiculous and absurd as he, if by his Reasons and Arguments you should be persuaded to condemn the use of Reason in Religion? Which would be in the same act to do, what you condemn, to use your Reason when you condemn it. If you must not use your Reason and private Judgment, then you must not by any Reasons be persuaded to condemn the use of Reason; for to condemn is an act of Judgment, which you must not use in matters of Religion. So that this is a point which no man can dispute against, and which no man can be convinced of by disputing, without the reproach of self-contradiction.

This is an honourable way of silencing these troublesome and clamorous Disputants, to let them see, that their Principles will not allow of Disputing, and that some of their Fundamental Doctrines, which they impose upon the World, are a direct contradiction to all Disputes, for the very admitting of a Dispute, confutes them; and the meanest man may quickly say more in this Cause, than their greatest Disputants can answer.

C H A P. II.

● *Concerning the several Topicks of Dispute.*

S E C T. I.

Concerning Arguments from Reason.

2. **T**He next Direction relates to the Topicks from which they Dispute; which are, either Reason, Scripture, or the Authority of the ancient Fathers and Writers of the Christian Church; for the infallible Authority of Popes, or General Councils, is the thing in dispute between us, and therefore can prove nothing till that be first proved by something else.

1. To begin then with Reason: Now we do allow of Reason in matters of Religion; and our Adversaries pretend to use it, when they think it will serve their turn, and rail at it, and despise it, when it is against them.

Not that we make Natural Reason the Rule or the Measure of our Faith; for to believe nothing but what may be proved by Natural Reason, is to reject Revelation, or to destroy the necessity of it; For what use is there of a Revelation, or at least what necessity of it, if nothing must be revealed, but what might have been known by Natural Reason without Revelation; or at least what Natural Reason can fully comprehend, when it is revealed? But though we believe such things, when they are revealed by God, which Natural Reason could never have taught us, and which Natural Reason does not see the depths and mysteries of; and therefore do not stint our

our Faith, and confine it within the narrow bounds of Natural Reason ; yet we use our Reason to distinguish a true from a counterfeit Revelation, and we use Reason to understand a Revelation ; and we Reason and Argue from revealed Principles, as we do from the Principles of Natural Knowledge : As from that Natural Principle, that there is but one God, we might conclude, without a Revelation, that we must worship but one God : so from that revealed Doctrine of one Mediator between God and Man, we may as safely conclude, that we must make our Applications, and offer up our Prayers, and Petitions to God, only by this one Mediator ; and so in other cases.

Now to direct Protestants how to secure themselves from being imposed on by the fallacious Reasoning of *Roman* Priests. I shall take notice of some of the chief faults in their way of Reasoning ; and when these are once known, it will be an easie matter for men of ordinary understandings, to detect their Sophistry.

1. As first, we must allow of no Reason against the Authority of plain and express Scripture : This all men must grant, who allow the Authority of Scripture to be superiour to Natural Reason ; for though Scripture cannot contradict plain, and necessary, and eternal Reasons, *i. e.* what the universal Reason of Mankind teaches for a necessary and eternal Truth ; yet God may command such things, as we see no Natural Reason for, and forbid such things as we see no Natural Reason against ; nay, it may be, when we think there are plausible Reasons against what God commands, and for what he forbids : But in all such cases a Divine Law must take place against our uncertain Reasonings ; for we may reasonably conclude, that God understands the Reasons and Natures of things, better than we do.

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

As for instance, when there is such an express Law as, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*: No reason in the World can justify the Worship of any other Being, good or bad Spirits, besides God, because there is an express Law against it, and no Reason can take place against a Law. The like may be said of the Second Commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing which is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them*. Which is so express a Law against Image-Worship, that no Reason must be admitted for it. No man need to trouble himself to answer the Reasons urged for such Practices, for no Reasons ought to be allowed, nor any Dispute admitted against such express Laws.

This, I suppose, all men will grant: but then the difficulty is, What is an express Law? For the Sense of the Law is the Law; and if there may be such a Sense put on the words, as will reconcile these Reasons with the Law, we must not say then, that such Reasons are against the Law, when, though they may be against the Law in some sense, yet they are consistent with other senses of the Law; and it is most likely, that is the true sense of the Law, which has the best reason on its side.

It must be confessed, there is some truth in this, when the words of the Law are capable of different senses, and Reason is for one sense, and the other sense against Reason, there it is fit, that a plain and necessary Reason should expound the Law: but when the Law is not capable of such different senses, or there is no such reason as makes one sense absurd, and the other necessary, the Law must be expounded according to the most plain and obvious.

obvious signification of the Words, though it should condemn that, which we think, there may be some reason for, or at least no reason against; for otherwise it is an easie matter to expound away all the Laws of God. To be sure all men must grant, that such Reasons as destroy the Law, or put an absurd or impossible fence on it, are against the Law, and therefore must be rejected, how plausible soever they appear: As for instance, Some there are, who to excuse the Church of *Rome* from Idolatry in Worshipping Saints, and Angels, and the Virgin *Mary*, positively affirm, that no man can be guilty of Idolatry, who worships one Supreme God; as a late Author expressly teaches: *As for the Invocation of Saints, unless they Worship them as the Supreme God, the Charge of Idolatry is an idle word; and the Adoration it self, which is given to them as Saints, is a direct Protestation against Idolatry, because it supposes a Superiour Deity; and that supposition cuts off the very being of Idolatry.* Now, not to examine what force there is in this Reason, our present enquiry is onely, How this agrees with the first Commandment, *thou shalt have none other Gods before me?* before my Face, as it is in the *Hebrew*: Which supposes an acknowledgment of the Supreme God, together with other Gods; for otherwise, though they Worship other Gods, they do not do it before the Face of God, while they see him, as it were, present before them: to worship other Gods in the presence of the Supreme God, or before his Face, as that Phrase signifies, is to worship them together with him; and therefore this is well expressed by the *Septuagint*, by *παρὰ μέν*, besides me; which supposes that they worshipped him too. And our Saviour expounds this Law by, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve.* So that this Reason, That there can be no Idolatry, where the Lord

*Reasons for A-
bragating the
Tist, p. 133.*

Matth. 4. 10.

Jehovah is Worshipped as the Supreme God, contradicts the very letter of this Law.

Ibid. p. 80.

How then does this Author get rid of the first Commandment? Truly by laying it all aside: for he gives this as the whole Sence of the first Commandment, That God enjoys the Worship of himself, who, by his Almighty Power, had delivered them from their Egyptian Bondage. But is this all that these words, *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*, signifies? The Worship of God indeed is supposed in them; but the express words of the Law, are not for the Worship of the Lord *Jehovah*, but against the Worship of any other Gods, before him, or besides him: But according to our new Expositor, this is no part of the Law, though according to the express words, it is the principal, if not the whole meaning of it.

If this Argument be good, *viz.* That Idolatry is nothing else, but the Worship of other Beings besides the Lord *Jehovah*, as Supreme Gods, then *other Gods*, in this Commandment, must signifie other *Supreme Gods*; and then the Commandment runs thus: Thou shalt have no other *supreme Gods* before me. Now this is a very absurd sence, because it supposes, that men may Believe and Worship more Supreme Gods than one; for if there can be but one Supreme God, and by Gods in the Commandment, be meant Supreme Gods, then it is absurd to forbid any man to have other Supreme Gods, because no man can acknowledge two Supremes: It should have been, Thou shalt not have any other *God* besides me, not *Gods*: For tho' it had been possible for them to have acknowledged some other God to be Supreme, and rejected the Lord *Jehovah* from being Supreme, yet they could not have other Supreme Gods. But it is evident, that God here forbids the Worship of a Plurality of Gods, of other Gods; and therefore they could not all be Supreme Gods.

But

But suppose it had been *any other God* in the single number, yet to understand this of a Supreme God, is very absurd; because there is no other Supreme God, but the Lord *Jehovah*, and those who worship but one Supreme God, worship him, and none else. For a Supreme God is not to be pointed at, is not to be distinguished by his Person or Features, as one man is distinguished from another: indeed a Prince may properly say to his Subjects, You shall own none but me for your King, because they know his Person, and can distinguish him from all other men. But the *Jews* never saw God, nor any likeness or similitude of him; they were not acquainted with his Person, nor could they distinguish him from other Gods, by any personal Characters; they knew him onely by his Notion and Character of the Supreme Being, who made the World and all things in it, and brought them by a mighty Hand out of the Land of *Agypt*. Now does it not sound very strange, that the Supreme God, who is known onely by this Character, that he is Supreme, the Great Creator and Sovereign Lord of the World, should make a Law, that we should worship no other Supreme God but himself; when it is absolutely impossible, that he who worships a Supreme and Sovereign God, should worship any other God but himself, because he alone is the Supreme God; and therefore those who worship the Supreme God, under this Notion as Supreme, worship him, and no other Being. So that if we will make sence of it, the meaning of the first Commandment is plainly this: Thou shalt not give Divine Honours to any other Beings, as to inferiour Gods, as the Idolatrous Practice of the World now is, which worships a great many things for Gods; but thou shalt worship onely one Supreme and Sovereign Being, the Maker and Sovereign Lord of the

A Preservative against POPERY.

the World, which is I my self, the Lord *Jehovah*, who brought thee out of the Land of *Agypt*, out of the House of Bondage. When the Supream God commands us to worship himself, the meaning must be, that we pay our Worship and Adorations to a Supream Being, considered as Supream; and he who worships such a Supream Being, worships the true God, whom we can distinguish from false Gods only by this Character, that he is Supream: And when this Supream Being forbids us to worship any other Gods, it must signifie, that we must worship nothing which is not Supream, not that we must not believe that which is not Supream to be the Supream God; which would be ridiculous Nonsense, to command them not to own that Being for the Supream God, which they know not to be Supream.

But it may be said, that the Heathens did worship some Beings, who were not the Supream God, as Supream, as this Author tells us, they did the Sun, though no body told him so, that I know of; for *Macrobius*, whom he cites in this Cause, does not say, that they worshipped the Sun as Supream God, though he says that most of the Gods they worshipped did signifie the Sun: But suppose the Sun were the chief Object of their Worship, and look'd on as the greatest and most principal God, this does not prove that they worshipped it as the Supream God: for these are two very different things to be worshipped as the chief God, which such a People have, and to be worshipped under the Notion of Absolutely Supream. Some Pagan Idolaters might worship a Creature as their chief and greatest Deity, and might call it their great, their greatest God, because it is the greatest God they have; their King and Prince of Gods, as Mr. *Selden* tells us, they called the Sun, as being the chief Planet who directed and governed the
Influen-

Influences of the rest, not as the Maker of the World, as this Author asserts: But those who direct their Worship to a Supream and Sovereign Being, considered as absolutely Supream, infinite in all Perfections, the Maker and Governour of the whole World, can under this Notion worship no other but the Lord *Jehovah*, because there is no other Supream God but he. Which shews, that the first Commandment is so far from forbidding the Worship of other Supream Gods, besides the Lord *Jehovah*, that to make sence of it, these *other Gods* must be expounded not of Supream, but inferiour Deities; and it is so far from being the Notion of Idolatry, to worship other Supream Beings, besides the Lord *Jehovah*, that it is Nonsense to suppose it. The true Notion of Idolatry in the first Commandment, is to worship some Inferiour Beings, together with the Supream God: It is a grosser sort of Idolatry, when men wholly neglect the Worship of the Supream God, and worship some Creature for their greatest and chiefest God; and it is worse still, when men worship bad Spirits, than when they worship good Spirits, together with the Supream God: but it is evident, this Law condemns the Worship of any Inferiour Beings, though we do also worship the Supream God.

I shall give but one Instance more of this nature, and that is, the second Commandment, which in such express words forbids the Worship of all Images, of what kind or nature soever. Now whatever Reasons men may imagine there are for the Worship of Images, they can be of no force against an express Law: And if these words be not express, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven image*, &c. I despair of ever seeing an express Law. For had God intended by this Law to forbid the Worship of any Images, under what notion or respects soever,

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

soever, I would desire to know what more significant and comprehensive words could have been used to have declared his mind, unless he had expressly rejected those false Interpretations, which the Patrons of Image-Worship have since invented, but were never thought on at that time.

Ibid. p. 30.

The same Author, whom I have so often mentioned, having expounded the first Commandment only to a positive sence, not to forbid the Worship of other Gods, but only to command the Worship of the Lord *Jehovah*, expressly contrary to the very letter and plain sence of the Law ; agreeably to this, he makes the second Commandment only to forbid the Worship of Idols or false Gods, and not that neither, unless they take them for the Supreme Deity. His words are these :

In the next place, he forbids them the Worship of all Idols, i. e. as himself describes them, the likeness or similitude of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Water under the Earth. A plain and indeed a logical definition this, that Idolatry is giving the Worship of the Supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible Deity, or any thing that can be represented by an Image, which nothing but corporeal Beings can, and to suppose such a Being the Supreme Deity, is the only true and proper Idolatry. Now let any man judge, whether this be not such a gloss as utterly destroys the Text.

As for his Worship of *Idols*, there is no such word in the Law, but Images, Likenesses, Similitudes ; but yet I will not dispute about this, for an *Idol* does not only signify a false God, but the Images either of false Gods, or false and corporeal Images of the true God. For the

135 Psal 15. *Idols of the Heathens, as the Psalmist tells us, are silver, and gold, the work of mens hands ; which can relate to nothing but Images and Pictures : for corporeal Deities, which*

which were made by God, are not the work of mens hands.

Now *Idolatry*, he says, *is giving the Worship of the Supream God to any created, corporeal, or visible Deity, or any thing which can be represented by an Image, which nothing but corporeal Beings can.* Now how plain and logical soever this definition of *Idolatry* be, there is not a word of it in the Text. That forbids not the Worship of any created, corporeal, or visible Deity, (which is forbid in the first Commandment) but only the Worship of *Images, the likeness of any thing in Heaven, or Earth, or in the Water under the Earth.* Now an Image differs from the thing whose Image it is. And it is a very strange Exposition of the second Commandment, which forbids nothing else but the Worship of Images, to take no notice of the Worship of Images as forbid in it. According to this gloss upon the Law, a man may worship ten thousand Images and Pictures, so he do not worship any visible and corporeal Deity, and not break this Commandment; which I think is not to give the fence of the Law, but to expound it away.

But how does the worship of corporeal and visible Deities, and nothing else, appear to be forbid by this Law, which mentions nothing at all but the likeness of things in Heaven, and Earth, and Water? Why, our learned Author imagines that no Images can be made, but onely for corporeal and visible Deities, because nothing but corporeal Beings can be represented by an Image: which Conceit is worth its weight in Gold; for it evidently proves, that there are no Pictures of God the Father, nor of the Trinity, in the Church of *Rome*, because they are not corporeal Deities, and therefore cannot be represented by an Image: so miserably have all Travellers been mistaken, who tell us of a great many such Pictures, and not very decent ones neither, There

can indeed be no Picture or Image to represent the likeness and similitude of an incorporeal God, but yet the visible parts of Heaven and Earth, and the visible Creatures in them, may be represented by Images, and the Images of such visible things may be made the symbolical representations of invisible and incorporeal Deities; and such invisible and incorporeal Deities may be worshipped in the likeness and similitude of corporeal things; and then I am sure to forbid the Worship of Images may signify something more than merely to forbid the Worship of some visible and corporeal Deities; for it may signify the Worship of invisible and incorporeal Deities, by visible Images. But I perceive he imagined, that when God forbid them to make and worship the likeness of any thing in Heaven, in Earth, or in the Waters under the Earth, he only forbid the Worship of those Beings, whose likeness or Images they made; whereas all men know, that those very Idolaters who worshipped these glorious parts of the Creation; did not represent them in their proper likenesses and figures; and that those who worshipped invisible and incorporeal Beings, did it by material and visible figures, which plainly proves, that when God forbid the Worship of Images, he had not respect merely to visible and corporeal Deities, but forbid Image-worship, whether they were the Images of visible and corporeal, or of invisible and incorporeal Deities.

Our Author durst not say, (as the Roman Advocates do) that God in the second Commandment only forbids the Worship of Images as Gods; which is such glorious Nonsense, that he could not digest it: and therefore he supposes, that God does not forbid the Worship of Images at all, but only of such corporeal Deities as may be represented by Images; which is a more gentle way

way of discarding the second Commandment, than to leave it out of their Books of Devotions. But if he will stand to this, he condemns the Popish worship of dead Men and Women, for they are corporeal Deities; nay, of Christ himself, considered as a man; who might be represented by an Image or Picture. And thus I doubt he has done the Church of *Rome* no kindness at all: for this is a Demonstration against the Worship of Saints, and the Virgin *Mary*, because they are created, corporeal, and visible Beings, who may be represented by Images; and he has thought of an Argument against Images, which neither the Scripture, nor the Church of *Rome*, know any thing of: The Church of *Rome* thinks it a good Argument for the Images of Christ, and the Saints, and the Virgin *Mary*, that they are representable by Images and Pictures; and therefore there can be no hurt in such Images: And the Scripture perpetually urges that Argument against Images, that the Deity cannot be represented by an Image; but neither of these Arguments are good, if our Author's Notion be good: For then to worship such corporeal Beings, as may be represented by Images, is to worship corporeal Gods, which is Idolatry. And there is no danger in the Images of an incorporeal Deity, which cannot represent the God for which they are made; for whatever the Image be, this is not to worship a corporeal God, since we know him to be incorporeal, and therefore it is not Idolatry.

But he has one Salvò still to excuse those from Idolatry, who worship even corporeal Gods, (for he speaks not a word of worshipping the Images of any Gods) that they are not Idolaters, unless they worship such corporeal Gods, *supposing them to be the Supreme Deity*; whereby he explains what he means by giving

A Preservative against P O P E R T.

the Worship of the Supream God to any created, corporeal, or visible Deity; viz. to think such a God to be the Supream God, is to worship it as Supream. And thus those who worshipped the Sun, not thinking him to be the Supream God, but the chief Minister of Providence under the Supream God, with reference to this Lower World, as most of the Sun Idolaters seemed to do, were not Idolaters. Nay, very few of the Philosophers, though they worshipped their Country Gods, were Idolaters, because they either, did not believe them to be any Gods, or at least not to be the Supream; as it is certain Socrates, and Plato, and Tully, and many others, did not.

But it is plain, that to worship the Supream God, is not meerly to suppose him to be Supream; for St. Paul tells us, that there were some, who knew God, but did not worship him as God: and therefore there is an external and visible Worship, which is due to the Supream God, as well as the belief, that he is Supream. And if this Worship which is due to the Supream God, be given to any Being which we our selves do not believe to be Supream, we are Idolaters; and then though we do not believe the Gods we worship to be Supream, any kind or degree of Religious Worship (or which is used as an Act of Religion, not as common and civil Respects) is Idolatry. This Commandment brings it as low as meerly bowing to an Image, and then I doubt no other Act of Religious Worship can escape the Charge of Idolatry.

But though it is not my business to pursue this Author, I cannot pass over the very next Paragraph, where he observes, *Though there may seem to be two sorts of it: (this Idolatry in worshipping Corporeal Beings) First, either to worship a material and created Being, as the Supream Deity:*

Deity : Or secondly, to ascribe any corporeal form or shape to the Divine Nature, yet in result, both are but one ; for to ascribe unto the Supreme God any corporeal form , is the same thing as to worship a created Being , for so is every corporeal Substance. Which is a very wonderful Paragraph : for thus some of the Ancient Christians, who believed God to be Corporeal, (as *Tertullian* himself did) but yet did not believe that he was created, but that he created all things, were as very Idolaters, as those who worshipped the Sun or Earth : And I would gladly know, who those men are, who ascribe unto the Supreme God, a Corporeal form, and yet think, that he was created. I am apt to think they differ a little in their Philosophy from our Author, and did believe that a Corporeal Supreme Deity might be uncreated ; and then, I suppose, there may be some difference also between their worshipping a Corporeal Created, and a Corporeal Uncreated God , at least if mens Belief and Opinions of things makes a difference, as this Author must allow ; for, if I understand him, to worship a Corporeal Being, without believing it to be Supreme, does not make them Idolaters, but if they believe it Supreme, it does ; and by the same reason, tho' to worship a Supreme Corporeal Created Deity (if that be not a contradiction) be Idolatry , yet to worship a Corporeal, which they believe to be an Uncreated Deity, is no Idolatry : For though I believe, with our Author, that all Corporeal Beings are created, yet, I suppose, those who believed God to be Corporeal, did not believe, that every thing, that is Corporeal, was created.

So that the first and second Commandments are very plain and express Laws, the one forbidding the Religious Worship of all inferiour Beings, Corporeal, or Incorporeal, with or without the Supream God, or forbidding the Worship of all other Beings but the Supreme God ; the other

other forbidding the External and Visible Worship of any material Images and Pictures: And though I am certain, there can be no good Arguments to justify such Practices as are forbid by these Laws, yet no Christian need trouble himself to answer them, for be they what they will, it is a sufficient answer to them, to say, They are against an exprefs Law.

2. Another Rule is, in matters of Faith, or in such things as can be known onely by Revelation, Not to build our Faith upon any Reason, without the Authority of Scripture. That this may be the better understood, I shall briefly shew what these things are, which can be known onely by Revelation, and therefore which every Protestant should demand a plain Scripture-proof for, before he believes them, whatever Reasons are pretended for them: As,

1. Whatever depends solely upon the Will and Appointment of God, which God might do, or might not do, as he pleased. In such cases our onely inquiry is, What God has done? And this can be known onely by Revelation; for Reason cannot discover it, because it depends not upon any necessary Reason, but on the free and arbitrary appointment of God: as *St. Paul* tells us, *That as no man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of man, that is in him; so no man knoweth the things of God, but the spirit of God*: That is, as no man can tell the secret thoughts and purposes of a man, nor how he will determine himself in matters of his own free Choice and Election: so what depends purely upon the Will of God, is known onely to the Spirit of God, and therefore can be made known to us onely by Revelation.

Many such things there are in dispute between us and the Church of *Rome*, which depend so intirely upon the Will of God, that they may be, or may not be, as God pleases. As for instance: No

No man, nor company of men can be Infallible, unless God bestow Infallibility on them; for Infallibility is not a natural Endowment, but a supernatural Gift; and therefore no reason can prove, the Bishop of *Rome*, or a General Council to be Infallible. God may make them Infallible if he pleases, and if he pleases, he may not do it: and therefore our only inquiry here is, What God has done? And this can be known only by Revelation.

Thus that the Church of *Rome* only, and those Churches that are in Communion with her, should be the Catholick Church, and the Bishop of *Rome* the Oecumenical Pastor, and the Center of Catholick Unity must depend wholly upon Institution, for nothing but the Will and Appointment of God, can give this Preheminence and Prerogative to the Church and Bishop of *Rome*, above all other Churches and Bishops. No reason then can prove this without plain and express Scripture to prove such an Institution.

Were there nothing in Scripture or Reason to prove, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not a propitiatory Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead, yet no Reason can prove, that it is: For the vertue and acceptation of a Sacrifice, intirely depends upon the will and appointment of God, at least so far, that no Sacrifice can be Propitiatory without it: And therefore there can be no other proof, that the Mass is a propitiatory Sacrifice, but the declaration of God's Will and Institution, that it shall be so.

2. Those things also can be proved only by Scripture, which are done in the other World, which is an unknown and invisible State to us, any farther than the Scripture has revealed it: and men may more reasonably expect to find out, by the power of Reason, what is done every day

day in *China*, or the most remote and unknown parts of the Earth, than what is done in the other World. And then there are a great many things wherein you must reject all pretences to Reason, any farther than it is supported by plain and evident Scripture. As to give some instances of this also :

1. No reason can prove, that there is such a place as Purgatory, for that is an invisible place in the other World; if there be any such place, no man living ever saw it; and then how can any man know, that there is such a place, unless it be revealed? To attempt to prove that there is such a place as Purgatory, meerly by Reason, is just as if a man, who had some general notion of an Inquisition, but never had any credible information, that there actually was any such place, should undertake to prove, by Reason, that there is and must be such a place as the Inquisition; though he would happen to guess right, yet it is certain his Reasons signified nothing; for some Countries have the Inquisition, and some have not; and therefore there might have been no Inquisition any where, how strong soever the Reasons for it might be thought to be. We may as well describe, by the power of Reason, the World in the Moon, and what kind of Inhabitants there are there, by what Laws they live, what their Business, what their Pleasures, and what their Punishments are, as pretend to prove, that there is a Purgatory in the next World, for they are both equally unknown to us; and if Reason cannot prove that there is such a Place as Purgatory, nothing else which relates to Purgatory, can be proved by Reason.

2. Nor can we know what the state of Saints in Heaven is, without a Revelation, for no man has been there to see: the state of the other World is such things as neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entred into

into the Heart of man to conceive. And then I cannot understand how we should know these things by Reason.

The Church of *Rome* teaches us to Pray to Saints, and to flie to their Help and Aid : And there are a great many things which a wise man would desire to know, before he can think it fit to pray to them ; which yet it is impossible to know, without a Revelation : as, Whether the Saints we direct our Prayers to, be in Heaven ? Which is very fit to be known, and yet can certainly be known but of a very few of that vast number, that are worshipped in the Church of *Rome* ; the Apostles of Christ, and the Virgin *Mary*, we have reason to believe are in Heaven, and we may hope well of others, but we cannot know it : No man can see who is there, and bare hope, how strong soever, is not a sufficient foundation for such a Religious Invocation of unknown Saints, who, after all our persuasions that they are in Heaven, may be in Hell, or at least in Purgatory, where they want our Prayers, but are not in a condition to interceed for us.

Thus it is very necessary to know, what the power and authority of the Saints in Heaven is, before we pray to them ; for it is to no purpose to pray to them, unless we know they can help us. The Council of *Trent* recommends to us the Invocation of Saints, as of those who reign with Christ in Heaven, and therefore have power and authority to present our Petitions, and procure those Blessings we pray for. And if I could find any such thing in Scripture, it would be a good reason to pray to them ; but all the Arguments in the World cannot prove this without a Revelation : they may be in Heaven, and not be Mediators and Advocates.

Thus, whatever their power and Authority may be, it

is to no purpose to pray to them, unless we are sure, that they hear our Prayers; and this nothing but a Revelation can assure us of; for no natural Reason can assure us, that meer Creatures, as the most glorious Saints in Heaven are, can hear our soft, nay mental Prayers, at such a vast distance, as there is between Heaven and Earth.

Such matters as these, which Reason can give us no assurance of, if they be to be proved at all, must be proved by Scripture; and therefore as the pretence of proving these things by Reason is vain, so no Protestant should be so vain, as to trouble himself to answer such Reasons.

But you'll say, The Papists do pretend to prove these things by Scripture. I answer, So far it is very well; and I onely desire our Protestant to keep them to their Scripture-Proofs, and to reject all their Reasons; and then let them see, what they can make of it. As for Scripture-Proofs, they shall be considered presently.

3. More particularly you must renounce all such Reasons, as amount to no more than some May-bes and Possibilities; for what only may be, may not be, and every thing that is possible, is not actually done. As for instance: When you ask these men, How you can be assured, that the Saints in Heaven can hear our Prayers? They offer to shew you by what ways this may be done: They may see all things in the Glass of the Trinity, and thereby know all things, that God knows. Which is but a may-be; and yet it is a more likely may-be, that there is no such Glass as gives the Saints a comprehensive view of all that is in God. Well, but God can reveal all the Prayers to the Saints, which are made to them on Earth. Very right! we dispute not God's Power to do this, but desire to know, whether he does
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it or not ; and his bare power to do it, does not prove that : But the Saints in Heaven may be informed of what is done on Earth, by those who go from hence thither, or by those Ministering Angels who frequently pass between Heaven and Earth : but this may not be too ; and if it were, it would not answer the purposes of Devotion : for in this way of intercourse the News may come too late to the Saints, to whom we pray, for the Saints to do us any good : as, suppose a man pray to the Virgin *Mary* in the hour of Death, or in a great Storm at Sea, the man may be dead, and Ship wrackt before the Virgin knows of his Prayers, and may carry the first news of it into the other World himself. Such kind of May-bes and Conjectures as these, are a very sorry Foundation for an Infallible Church to build her Faith on.

4. You must reject also all such Reasons in Divine and Spiritual things, as are drawn from Earthy Patterns. A considering man would a little wonder, how a Papist should so punctually determine what is done in the other World, without speaking with any one who has seen it, and without having any Revelation about it, as I have already observed ; but whoever considers many of their Arguments, will soon find that they make this World the Pattern of the next, and reason from Sensible to Spiritual things.

Thus the true Foundation of Saint-Worship is, that men judge of the Court of Heaven by the Courts of earthly Princes : The most effectual way to obtain any Request of our Prince, is to address our selves to some powerful Favourite ; and they take it for granted, that all Saints and Angels in Heaven are such Favourites, and can obtain whatever they ask ; and therefore they pray very devoutly to them, and beg their Intercession

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

with God and their Saviour. Especially in earthly Courts the Queen Mother is supposed to have a powerful influence upon the young Prince her Son; and therefore they do not doubt but the Virgin *Mary*, the Mother of Christ, can do what she pleases with her Son; And since it is generally observed, that Women are more soft, and tender, and compassionate, than men, they hope to gain that by her Intercession, which He, who died for them, would not grant without it; and therefore they beg her to shew her self to be a Mother, that is, to take the Authority of a Mother upon her, and command her Son. Thus Princes and Great Men love to have their Pictures set up in publick places, and to have all civil Respects paid to them, which redounds to the honour of those whose Pictures they are; and therefore they imagine that this is as acceptable to Christ and the Saints, as it is to Men; as if the other World were nothing else but a new Scene of Sense and Passion.

Mankind is very apt to such kind of Reasonings as these; and indeed they can have no other, when they will undertake to guess at unseen and unknown things: But if there be any difference between the Court of Heaven and Earth, if pure Spirits, who are separated from Flesh and Sense, have other Passions and Resentments than Men have, that is, if we must not judge of spiritual things by Sense, of the Government of God by the Passions of men, then such Reasonings as these may betray us to absurd and foolish Superstitions, but are a very ill Foundation for any new and uncommanded Acts of Worship.

5. Never admit any Arguments meerly from the usefulness, conveniency, or supposed necessity of any thing, to prove that it is. As for instance: A Supream Oecume-

Oecumenical Bishop, and an Infallible Judge of Controversies, are thought absolutely necessary to the Unity of the Church, and Certainty of Faith, and confounding of Schisms and Heresies: If there be not a Supreme Pastor, there can be no Unity; if there be not an Infallible Judge, there can be no certainty in Religion; every man must be left to his own private Judgment, and then there will be as many different Religions, as there are Faces. Now if I thought all this were true, (as I believe not a word of it is) I should onely conclude, that it is great pity that there is not an Universal Pastor and Infallible Judge instituted by Christ; but if you would have me conclude from these Premises, *Ergo*, there is an Universal Bishop and Head of the Church, and an Infallible Judge of Controversies, I must beg your pardon for that; for such Arguments as these do not prove, that there is such a Judge, but only that there ought to be one, and therefore I must conclude no more from them. Indeed this is a very fallacious way of Reasoning, because what we may call useful, convenient, necessary, may not be so in it self; and we have reason to believe it is not so, if God have not appointed what we think so useful, convenient, or necessary: which is a truer and more modest way of Reasoning, than to conclude that God has appointed such a Judge, when no such thing appears, onely because we think it so useful and necessary, that he ought to do it. These Directions are sufficient to Preserve all considering Protestants from being imposed on by the fallacious Reasonings of Papists.

S E C T. II.

Concerning Scripture-Proofs.

2: **L**et us now consider their Scripture-Proofs, though it is not choice, but necessity, which puts them upon this Tryal: When they have good Catholicks to deal with, a little Scripture will serve the turn, but Hereticks will be satisfied with nothing else; and therefore in disputing with them, they are forced to make some little shew and appearance of proving their Doctrines by Scripture; but they come very unwillingly to it, and make as much of a little, as may be. The truth is, there is Evidence enough, that they have no great confidence in the Scripture themselves, and therefore do not deal honestly and fairly with poor Hereticks, when they make their boasts of Scripture.

For did they believe that their Doctrines which they endeavour to prove from Scripture, were plainly and evidently contained in them, why should they deny the People the liberty of reading the Scriptures? If the Scriptures be for them, why should they be against the Scriptures? The common Pretence is, that those who are unlearned, put very wild senses upon Scripture, and expound it by their own fancies; which in many cases indeed is too true: but why should the Church of Rome be more afraid of this, than other Protestant Churches? If they think the Scripture is as much for them, as we think it is for us, why dare not they venture this as well as we? We are not afraid men should read the Scripture, though we see what wild Interpretations some put on them, because we are certain we can prove our Faith by Scripture, and are able to satisfy all honest men, who will

will impartially study the Scriptures, that we give the true sence of them; and if they believed, they could do so too, why do they avoid this tryal, when ever they can? For though they admit People to dispute from the Scripture in *England*, where they cannot help it, yet they will not allow them so much as to see the Scriptures in *Italy* or *Spain*, where they have power to hinder it: Nay they themselves do in effect confesa, that the peculiar Doctrines and Practices of their Religion, wherein they differ from all other Christian Churches, cannot be proved by Scripture. And therefore to help them out, where the Scripture fails, they fly to unwritten Traditions, which they make of equal authority with the Scriptures themselves; which they would never do, were they not convinced, that the Scriptures are not so plain on their side, as to satisfie any man, who has not already given himself up to the Church of *Rome* with an implicit Faith.

And therefore, before you enter into any debate about the sence of any particular Texts of Scripture, and their way of proving their particular Doctrines from Scripture, ask them two Questions, without a plain Answer to which, it is to no purpose to dispute with them out of Scripture.

Ask 1. Whether they will allow the Holy Scriptures to be a complete and perfect Rule of Faith; that no Christian ought to receive any Doctrine for an Article of Faith, which cannot be proved from Scripture? This to be sure they must not allow, unless they will reject the Council of *Trent*, which gives as venerable an Authority to Tradition, as to Scripture it self: Since then they have two Rules, Scripture and Tradition; when they pretend to dispute from Scripture, it is reasonable to know of them, whether they will stand to Scripture, and reject

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

reject such a Doctrine if it cannot be plainly proved out of Scripture: For if they will not stand to this, they give up their Cause, and there is no need to dispute with them: For why should I dispute with any man from Scripture, who will not stand to the determination of Scripture? We Protestants indeed do own the Authority of Scripture; and what we see plainly proved out of Scripture, we must abide by: which is reason enough for us to examine the Scripture-proofs which are produced by our Adversaries. But it is sufficient to make them blush, if they had any modesty, to pretend to prove their Doctrines from Scripture, when they themselves do not believe them merely upon the Authority of Scripture, and dare not put their Cause upon that issue; which gives a just suspicion, that they are conscious to themselves, that their Scripture-proofs are not good, and should make Protestants very careful, how they are imposed on by them. To dispute upon such Principles as are not owned on both sides, can establish nothing, tho it may blunder and confound an Adversary; it is onely a tryal of Wit, where the subtlest Disputant will have the Victory; and it is not worth the while for any man to dispute upon these terms.

This is not to reject the Authority of Scriptures, because the Papists reject it, which no Protestant can or will do; but it is an effectual way for men, who are not skilful in Disputations, to deliver themselves from the troublesome Importunities of Popish Priests, when learned men, who can detect their Fallacies, are out of the way. Let them but ask them, Whether all the peculiar Doctrines of the Church of *Rome* can be proved by plain Scripture-evidence? If they say, they can; then they must reject the necessity of unwritten Traditions; and acknowledge the Scripture to be a complete and perfect Rule

Rule of Faith. A point, which I believe, no understanding Priest will yield. If they say, they cannot; ask them, With what confidence they pretend to prove that from Scripture, which they confess is not in it? Why they go about to impose upon you, and to perswade you to believe that upon the Authority of Scripture, which they themselves confess, is not, at least not plainly, contained in Scripture.

2. Ask such Disputants, who alledge the Authority of Scripture to prove their Popish Doctrines, How they themselves know what the sence of Scripture is, and how you shall know it? For it is a ridiculous undertaking to prove any thing by Scripture, unless there be a certain way of finding out the sence of Scripture. Now there can be but three ways of doing this, either by an infallible Interpreter, or by the unanimous Consent of Primitive Fathers, or by such Humane means as are used to find out the sence of other Books.

• I. If they say, we must learn the sence of Scripture from an infallible Interpreter: Tell them, this is not to dispute, but to beg the Cause. They are to prove from Scripture, the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*; and to do this, they would have us take the Church of *Rome's* Exposition of Scripture. And then we had as good take her word for all, without disputing. But yet,

1. They know, that we reject the pretences of an infallible Interpreter: We own no such infallible Judge of the sence of Scripture. And therefore, at least, if they will dispute with us, and prove their Doctrines by Scripture, they must fetch their Proofs from the Scriptures themselves, and not appeal to an infallible Interpreter, whom we disown: Which is like appealing to a Judge in Civil matters, whom one of the contending Parties thinks incompetent, and to whose Judgment they will not

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A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

stand ; which is never likely to end any Controversie : and yet they cannot quit an infallible Interpreter, without granting, that we may understand the Scriptures without such an Interpreter ; which is to give up the Cause of Infallibility.

2. One principal Dispute between us and the Church of *Rome*, is about this infallible Interpreter ; and they know, that we will not own such an Interpreter, unless they can prove from Scripture, that there is such an one, and who he is. The inquiry then is, How we shall learn from Scripture, that there is such an infallible Interpreter ? that is, who shall Expound those Scriptures to us, which must prove that there is an infallible Interpreter : if without an infallible Interpreter we cannot find out the true sense of Scripture, how shall we know the true sense of Scripture, before we know this infallible Interpreter ? For an Interpreter, how infallible soever he be, cannot interpret Scripture for us, before we know him ; and if we must know this infallible Interpreter by Scripture, we must at least understand these Scriptures, which direct us to this infallible Interpreter, without his assistance. So that of necessity some Scriptures must be understood without an infallible Interpreter, and therefore he is not necessary for the Interpretation of all Scripture : And then I desire to know, why other Scriptures may not be understood the same way, by which we must find out the meaning of those Texts which direct us to an infallible Interpreter ? There are a hundred places of Scripture, which our Adversaries must grant, are as plain and easie to be understood, as those : And we believe it as easie a matter to find all the other *Trent*-Articles in Scripture, as the Supremacy and Infallibility of the Bishop of *Rome*. If ever there needed an infallible Interpreter of Scripture, it is to prove such an infallible
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Interpreter from Scripture ; but upon this occasion he cannot be had, and if we may make shift without him here, we may as well spare him in all other cases.

3. Suppose we were satisfied from Scripture, that there is such an infallible Interpreter, yet it were worth knowing, where his infallible Interpretation is to be found ; for if there be such an Interpreter who never interprets, I know not how either they or we shall understand Scripture the better for him : Now, have either Popes or General Councils given us an authentick and infallible Exposition of Scripture ? I know of none such : all the Expositions of Scripture in the Church of *Rome*, are writ by private Doctors, who were far enough from being infallible ; and the business of General Councils, was not to expound Scripture, but to define Articles of Faith : and therefore we find the sense of very few Texts of Scripture Synodically defined by any General Council ; I think, not above four or five by the Council of *Trent*. So that after all their talk of an infallible Interpreter, when they undertake to expound particular Texts, and to dispute with us about the sense of them, they have no more Infallibility in this, than we have ; for if they have an infallible Interpreter, they are never the better for him, for he has not given them an infallible Interpretation, and therefore they are forced to do as Protestants do, interpret Scripture according to their own skill and understanding, which, I suppose, they will not say, is infallible.

But you'll say, though the Church has not given us an infallible Interpretation of Scripture, yet she has given us an infallible Exposition of the Faith, and that is an infallible Rule for expounding Scripture. I answer, there is a vast difference between these two : for our dispute is not about the sense of their Church, but about the

fence of the Scripture; we know what Doctrines their Church has defined, but we desire to see them proved from Scripture: And is it not a very modest and pleasant proposal, when the Dispute is, how their Faith agrees with Scripture, to make their Faith the Rule of expounding Scripture? Though, I confess, that is the only way I know of, to make their Faith and the Scriptures agree; but this brings the Scripture to their Faith, does not prove their Faith from Scripture.

II. As for expounding Scripture by the unanimous consent of Primitive Fathers: This is indeed the Rule which the Council of *Trent* gives, and which their Doctors swear to observe; how well they keep this Oath, they ought to consider. Now as to this, you may tell them, that you would readily pay a great deference to the unanimous Consent of Fathers, could you tell how to know it; and therefore in the first place you desire to know the agreement of how many Fathers makes an unanimous Consent: for you have been told, that there have been as great variety in Interpreting Scripture among the ancient Fathers, as among our modern Interpreters; that there are very few, if any controverted Texts of Scripture, which are interpreted by an unanimous Consent of all the Fathers. If this unanimous Consent then signifie all the Fathers, we shall be troubled to find such a Consent in expounding Scripture; must it then be the unanimous Consent of the greatest number of Fathers? This will be a very hard thing, especially for unlearned men to tell Nos: we can know the Opinion onely of those Fathers who were the Writers in every Age, and whose Writings have been preserved down to us; and who can tell, whether the major number of those Fathers who did not write, or whose Writings are lost, were of the same mind with those whose Writings we have?
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and why must the major part be always the wisest and best men? and if they were not, the Consent of a few wise men, is to be preferred before great numbers of other Expositors.

Again, ask them, whether these Fathers were Infallible or Traditionary Expositors of Scripture, or whether they expounded Scripture according to their own private Reason and Judgment: if they were Infallible Expositors, and delivered the Traditionary sense and interpretation of Scripture, it is a little strange, how they should differ in their Expositions of Scripture, and as strange how private Doctors and Bishops should in that Age come to be Infallible, and how they should lose it in this; for now Infallibility is confined to the Bishop of *Rome*, and a General Council. If they were not Infallible Expositors, how comes their Interpretations of Scripture to be so sacred, that it must not be opposed? Nay, how comes an Infallible Church to prescribe such a Fallible Rule of interpreting Scriptures? If they expounded Scripture according to their own Reason and Judgment, as it is plain they did; then their Authority is no more sacred than their Reason is; and those are the best Expositors, whether Ancient or Modern, whose Expositions are backed with the best Reasons. We think it a great confirmation of our Faith, that the Fathers of the Church in the first and best Ages did believe the same Doctrines, and expound Scripture in great and concerning points, much to the same sense that we do; and therefore we refuse not to appeal to them, but yet we do not wholly build our Faith upon the Authority of the Fathers; we forsake them where they forsake the Scriptures, or put perverse senses on them; and so does the Church of *Rome* too, after all their boast of the Fathers, when they contradict the present *Roman*-Catholick Faith,

Faith, as they do very often, though I believe without any malicious design, because they knew nothing of it.

However, ask them once more, whether that sense which they give of those Texts of Scripture, which are controverted between us and the Church of *Rome*, be confirmed by the unanimous consent of all the ancient Fathers: whether, for instance, all the ancient Fathers did expound those Texts, *Thou art Peter, and on this Rock will I build my Church, and feed my Sheep, &c.* of the personal Supremacy and Infallibility of *Peter* and his Successors the Bishops of *Rome*? Whether they all expounded those words, *This is my Body*, of the Transubstantiation of the Elements of Bread and Wine into the natural Flesh and Bloud of Christ? and those words, *Drink ye all of this*, to signifie, 'Let none drink of the Cup but the Priest who consecrates? and so in other Scriptures. If they have the confidence to say, that all the Fathers expounded these and such-like Scriptures, as the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* now do, tell them, you have heard and seen other Expositions of such Scriptures cited from the ancient Fathers by our Divines, and that you will refer that cause to them, and have it tried whenever they please.

III. There is no other way then left of understanding Scripture, but to expound it as we do other Writings; by considering the signification and propriety of words, and phrases, the scope and context of the place, the reasons of things, the Analogie between the Old and New Testament, and the like: When they dispute with Protestants, they can reasonably pretend to no other way of expounding Scripture, because we admit of no other; and yet if they allow of this, they open a wide Gap for all Heresies to come into the Church; they give up the Authority of the Church; and make every man his

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own Pope, and expose themselves to all the senseless Rallery of their admired *Pax Vobis*. By this they confess, that the Scripture may be understood by Reason, that they can back their Interpretations with such powerful Arguments, as are able to convince Hereticks, who reject the Authority of an infallible Interpreter : and then they must unsay all their hard Sayings against the Scriptures, That *they are dark and obscure dead Letters, unsenced Characters, meer figured Ink and Paper* ; they must recant all their Rallery against expounding Scripture by a private Spirit, and allowing every man to judge of the sence of it, and to chuse what he pleases : for thus they do themselves when they dispute with Hereticks about the sence of Scripture ; and I am pretty confident, they would never speak against Scripture nor a private Spirit more, if this private Spirit would but make us Converts ; but the mischief is, a private Spirit, if it have any tincture of Sence and Reason, seldom expounds Scripture to a Roman-Catholick sence.

So that in truth it is a vain, nay a dangerous thing for Papists to dispute with Protestants about the sence of Scripture ; for it betrays the Cause of the Church, and vindicates the Scriptures and every mans natural Right of judging from the Usurpations and Encroachments of a pretended Infallibility ; but yet dispute they do, and attempt to prove their Doctrines from Scripture. And because it is too large a task for this present Undertaking, to examine all their Scripture-Proofs, I shall only observe some general faults they are guilty of, which whoever is aware of, is in no danger of being imposed on by their Pretences to Scripture : and I shall not industriously multiply Particulars, for there are some few palpable mistakes, which run through most of their Scripture-Proofs.

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1. As first, many of their Scripture-Proofs are founded upon the likeness of a word or phrase, without any regard to the sense and signification of that word in Scripture, or to the matter to which it is applied : As for instance, There is not a more useful Doctrine to the Church of *Rome*, than that of unwritten Traditions, which are of equal Authority with the Scriptures ; for were this owned, they might put what Novel Doctrines they pleased upon us, under the venerable name of ancient and unwritten Traditions. Well, we deny that there are any such unwritten Traditions, which are of equal Authority with the Scripture, since the Canon of Scripture was written and perfected, and desire them to prove that there are any such unwritten Traditions. Now they think it sufficient to do this, if they can but find the word Tradition in Scripture ; and that we confess they do in several places : for Tradition signifies only the delivery of the Doctrine of the Gospel, which we grant was not done perfectly in writing, when those Epistles were written, which speak of Traditions, *1 Thess. 2. 15.* *by word*, as well as by *Epistle*. But because the whole Doctrine of the Gospel was not written at first, but delivered by word of mouth, does it hence follow, that after the Gospel is written, there are still unwritten Traditions of equal Authority with the Scripture ? This is what they should prove ; and the meer naming of Traditions in Scripture, before the Canon was perfected, does not prove this ; for all men know, that the Gospel was delivered by word of mouth, or by unwritten Tradition, before it was written ; but this does by no means prove, that there are unwritten Traditions, after the Gospel was written. To prove this, they should shew us where it is said, that there are some Traditions which shall never be written, that the Rule of Faith shall always

ways consist partly of written, partly of unwritten Traditions.

Thus we know how zealous the Church of *Rome* is for their Purgatory-fire, wherein all men, who are in a state of Grace, or delivered from the guilt of their sins, must yet undergo that punishment of them, which has not been satisfied for by other means. As profitable a Doctrine as any the Church of *Rome* has, because it gives great authority to Sacerdotal Absolution, and sets a good price upon Masses for the Dead, and Indulgences: and yet the best proof they have for this, is that Fire mentioned, *1 Cor. 3. 13, 14, 15. Every mans work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall declare every mans work of what sort it is.—If any mans work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, but so as by fire.* Now here is mention of Fire indeed; but how does it appear to be the Popish Purgatory? Suppose it were meant of a material Fire, tho' that does not seem so proper to try good or bad Actions, a true and Orthodox or Heretical Faith, yet this Fire is not kindled till the Day of Judgment, which is eminently in Scripture called *the day*, and is the only day, we know of in Scripture, which shall *be revealed by fire*, when the *Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire*, *2 Thess. 1. 7, 8.* So that here is nothing but the word Fire, applied to another Fire, than *St. Paul* ever thought on, to prove a Popish Purgatory.

Thus they make Confession to a Priest ordinarily necessary to obtain the Forgiveness of our sins; and have no better Scripture-Proofs for it, but that we are often commanded to confess our sins, sometimes to God, and sometimes to one another, but never to a Priest.

They have made a Sacrament of Extream Unction,
I where.

6 James 14,
15.

wherein the sick Person is anointed for the Forgiveness of Sins; and though a Sacrament ought to have the most plain and express Institution, both as to the matter, and form, and use, and end of it, yet the only Proofs they produce for this, is the Disciples working Miraculous Cures by Anointing the Sick with Oyl, 6 Mark 13. which methinks is a little different from the Sacrament of extream Unction, which is not to cure their sickness, but to forgive their sins; and St. James his Command, *Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oyl in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.* Where anointing with Oyl, joyned with fervent Prayer, is prescribed as a means of restoring the sick person to health again; and therefore is not the Popish Extream Unction, which is to be administered onely to those who are dying: And though St. James adds, *And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him;* yet, 1. This is not said to be the effect of Anointing, but of the fervent Prayer: and 2. This very Forgiveness of Sins does not refer to a plenary Pardon of sins in the other World, but signifies the removal of the visible and sensible punishments of Sin, in restoring the sick Person to health again. That though such sickness was inflicted on him for his sins, and possibly were the effects of Church-censures, which in those days were confirmed and ratified by bodily punishments, yet upon his Reconciliation to the Church, and the Prayers of the Elders, and the Ceremony of Anointing, he should be restored to health again, which was an external and visible Remission of his sins, and should be a plenary Pardon, if he brought forth the true and genuine fruits of Repentance: This is very natural, and

and very agreeable to the scope and design of the Text, and differs as much from the Popish Extream Undtion, as their greatest Adversaries could wish. Such kind of Proofs as these, are meerly the work of Fancy and Imagination, and can impose upon no man who will but attend to the different use and signification of words.

2. Another grand fault our Roman Adversaries are guilty of is, that their Scripture-proofs are always very lame and imperfect, that is, that they never prove their whole Doctrine from Scripture, but only some little part of it: They draw very fine and artificial Schemes, and if they can find some little appearance in Scripture to countenance any one part of it, they take that for a Proof of the whole. As for instance:

Thus they tell us, that Christ made *Peter* the Prince of the Apostles, and the Head of the Universal Church, his own Vicar upon Earth; and that the Bishops of *Rome*, who are *St. Peter's* Successors, succeed not only to his Chair, but to all the Rights and Prerogatives of *St. Peter*; and therefore the Bishop of *Rome* also is the Head of the Church, the Oecumenical Pastor, who neither wants *St. Peter's* Keys nor Sword. This is a very notable point, if it were well proved; but as I observed before, this being a matter of pure Institution, which depends wholly upon the Will of God, it can be proved only by Scripture: How much then of this do they pretend to prove from Scripture? Why, they will prove by Scripture, that *St. Peter* was the Prince of the Apostles, because Christ said unto him, *Thou art Peter, and on this Rock will I build my Church: and I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and feed my Sheep;* which indeed are lamentable Proofs, for the same Power was given to all the Apostles, 20 *John* 21, 22, 23. *Then said Jesus unto them, Peace be unto you, as my Father sent me,*

me, even so send I you, all of you ; and therefore not one in subjection to another, but all with equal Power : And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost ; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. Accordingly on the day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost fell on them all, they were all endowed with the Gift of Tongues, and Miracks, and Prophecie ; they all had the same Infallible Spirit, and therefore needed no superiour Head over them : They were to be separated into all parts of the World, where they could have no Communication with each other, and therefore could have no Universal Head. The History of the Acts of the Apostles gives not the least intimation of any such Superiority, which either *St. Peter* challenged, or the other Apostles paid him ; which are strong Presumptions against such a Supremacy of *St. Peter* : and I suppose they themselves will grant, that all the rest of the Apostles were as Infallible as he.

But suppose we should grant them, that *St. Peter* was the chief of the Apostles, and had a kind of Primacy not of Government, but Order, how do they prove from Scripture, that the Bishop of *Rome* succeeds in all the Rights and Prerogatives of *St. Peter* ? for unless this be proved, whatever Prerogative *St. Peter* had, it signifies nothing to them : and yet this cannot be proved, but by institution ; for though Christ had bestowed a Primacy on *St. Peter*, yet unless he expressly grant it to his Successors too, nay to his Successors in the See of *Rome*, his Primacy, as being a personal Prerogative, must die with his Person : As a Prince may grant a Priority to persons in the same Office and Power, may make a first Colonel, or a first Captain, but if these men to whom the precedency is given, die or are removed, those who succeed in their Office and Power,

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to the same Regiment or Company, do not therefore succeed to their Priority too; for this did not belong to their Office, but to their Persons; and the King may give the Priority again to whom he pleases, or appoint them to succeed in course, according to their admission into such Offices. And by the same reason, the Primacy of the *Roman Bishops*, who are *St. Peter's* Successors, does not follow from the Primacy of *St. Peter*, unless they can shew, that Christ has given them the Primacy also, as well as *St. Peter*; and this must be proved from Scripture, because it is matter of Institution, and no Arguments in the World can prove any thing, which depends solely upon an Institution, without proving the Institution: But this the *Roman Doctors* never pretend to, for they know, that there is not one word in Scripture about it; and nothing but the Authority of Scripture can prove a Divine Institution. So that could they prove the Primacy of *St. Peter* from Scripture, they prove but half their Point, and that the most inconsiderable half too, for it does them no good. And therefore when they make a great noise about *St. Peter's* Primacy and Prerogatives, never trouble your selves to dispute that Point with them, which is nothing to the purpose; but require them to prove, from Scripture, that the Bishop of *Rome*, as *St. Peter's* Successor, is appointed by Christ to be the supream Oecumenical Bishop, and the Prince of all Bishops. And if you stick here, as in reason you ought, there is an end of that Controversie.

Thus there is nothing the Church of *Rome* makes a greater noise about, than Infallibility, though they are not agreed where to place this Infallibility, whether in the Pope or a General Council: But let it be where it will, this being a matter of Institution, must be proved by Scripture: how then in the first place do they prove the

A Preservative against P O P E R Y.

the Pope to be Infallible? That they think is very plain, because Christ says, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* But how does this prove, that the Bishop of *Rome* is Infallible? For here is not one word of the Bishop of *Rome*. Yes, this proves *St. Peter* to be infallible, who was afterwards Bishop of *Rome*, and therefore all his Successors are infallible too. Now that *St. Peter* was infallible, as all the other Apostles were, we readily grant; though, I think this Text does not prove it: But does this prove the Bishop of *Rome's* Infallibility? Just as *St. Peter's* Primacy proves the Pope to be the Oecumenical Primate: They themselves must grant, that an infallible Apostle may have a fallible Bishop for his Successor; or else they must either deny, that the rest of the Apostles, as well as *St. Peter*, were infallible, or they must grant, that all the Apostles Successors, that is, all the Bishops, who succeeded any of the Apostles in their Sees, must be as infallible as the Bishops of *Rome*, who succeeded *St. Peter*; and then there will be so much Infallibility, that it will be worth nothing: If then there be not a natural and necessary entail of Infallibility upon the Successors of infallible Apostles, they must shew us an express Institution, which makes the Successors of *Peter* at *Rome* infallible. And let our Protestant demand this, before he owns the Infallibility of the Pope of *Rome*, and then, I believe, they will not think him worth Converting.

Thus as for those who place Infallibility in a General Council, demand a Scripture-proof of it, that they would produce the General Council's Charter for Infallibility: This they can't do; but they say the Church is infallible, and the General Council is the Church Representative, and therefore a General Council must be infallible too.

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So that here are several things for them to prove, and to prove by Scripture too; (for there is no other way of proving them) before they can prove the Infallibility of General Councils: As, 1. That the Church is Infallible. 2. That a General Council is the Church Representative. 3. That the Church Representative, is that Church to which the Promise of Infallibility is made. And then they might conclude, that a General Council, as being the Church Representative, is Infallible. Now instead of proving every particular of this by Scripture, (as they must do, if they will prove by Scripture, that General Councils are Infallible) they pretend to prove no more than the first of the three, that the Church is Infallible; and that very lamely too, as may appear more hereafter: and then they take all the rest for granted, without any proof: which is just as if a man, who in order to prove his Title to an Estate, is required to prove, that this Estate did anciently belong to his Family, that it was entailed upon the Heir Male, that this entail was never cut off, nor the Estate legally alienated, and that he alone is the true surviving Heir; should think it enough to prove only the first of these, that the Estate did anciently belong to his Family; which it might have done, and yet not belong to it now, or if it did still belong to it, he may not be the true Heir.

Thus if we consider what it is they teach about Purgatory, we shall quickly perceive, how little it is, they pretend to prove of it: they tell us, that there is a Purgatory-fire after this life, where men undergo the punishment of their sins, when the fault is pardoned: that the Church has Power, out of her stock of Merits, which consists of the supererogating Works of great and eminent Saints, to grant Pardons & Indulgences to men while they live, to deliver them from several thousand years punishment,

ment, which is due to their sins in Purgatory ; that the Souls in Purgatory may be released out of it by the Prayers, and Alms, and Masses of the living ; which is the very life and soul of this Doctrine of Purgatory : Now of all this, they pretend to prove no more from Scripture, but that there is a Purgatory-fire after this Life ; and how they prove it, you have already heard : But that either Penances or Pilgrimages, and other extraordinary Acts of Devotion, while we live, or the Pope's Pardons and Indulgences, can either remit or shorten the pains of Purgatory ; or that the Prayers and Alms of our living Friends, or Masses said for us by mercenary Priests, can deliver us out of Purgatory, which we are principally concerned to know, and without which, Purgatory will not enrich the Priests, nor the Church ; this they never attempt, that I know of, to prove by Scripture : Whether there be a Purgatory or not, in it self considered, is a meer speculative point, and of no value : But could they prove, that the Pope has the Keys of Purgatory, and that Alms and Masses will deliver out of Purgatory ; this were worth knowing, and is as well worth proving as any Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, for there is nothing they get more by. But if you will not believe this, till they produce a Scripture-Proof of it, you may let them dispute on about the place of Purgatory, and keep your Money in your Pocket. Thus it is in most other cases, if you take their whole Doctrine together, and demand a Proof of every part of it, and not take a Proof of some little branch of it, for a Proof of the whole, you will quickly find, that they will not be so fond of disputing, as some of them now are.

3. Another way our *Roman* Adversaries have of proving their Doctrines from Scripture is, instead of plain and positive Proofs, to produce some very remote and inevident

evident consequences from Scripture, and if they can but hale a Text of Scripture into the premises, whatever the conclusion be, they call it a Scripture-Proof. There are infinite Instances of this, but I can only name some few.

Thus they prove the perpetual Infallibility of the Church, because Christ promises his Disciples to be with them *to the end of the world*, 28 *Matth.* 20. which promise cannot be confined to their persons, for they were to die long before the end of the World, and therefore must extend to their Successors. Suppose that, and does Christ's being with them, necessarily signify, that he will make them Infallible? Is not Christ with every particular Church, with every particular Bishop, nay with every particular good Christian, and must they all be Infallible then?

Thus Christ promises that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against his Church; *Ergo*, the Church is Infallible; for if Error and Heresie prevails against the Church, the Gates of Hell prevail against it: And I add, if Sin and Wickedness prevail against the Church, the Gates of Hell prevail against it; *Ergo*, the Church is Impeccable, and cannot sin; which is to the full as good a consequence as the other: And therefore the Gates of Hell prevailing, can neither signify the meer prevalency of Errors or Sin in the Church, but such a prevalency as destroys the Church; and this shall never be, because Christ has promised it shall never be; and it may never be, though the Church be not Infallible; and therefore this does not prove Infallibility.

Thus they prove there is such a place as Purgatory, where Sins are forgiven and expiated, because our Saviour says, That the sin against the Holy Ghost, shall neither be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come,

Matt. 12. 32. and therefore there are some Sins which are forgiven in the next World, because there is a sin which shall not be forgiven there. Now not to consider the ordinary use of such Phrases to signify no more, than it shall never be, without distinguishing between what is to be done in this World, and what in the next; nay, not to consider how contrary this is to their own Doctrine of Purgatory, that men who go to Purgatory have all their Sins already forgiven, though they must suffer the punishment of them there; which how absurd soever it is, yet shews, that Purgatory is not a place of forgiving Sins; and therefore cannot be meant by our Saviour in those words; yet supposing all they would have, that there shall be some Sins forgiven in the next World, which are not forgiven in this; How does this prove a Popish Purgatory, where Souls endure such torments as are not inferiour to those of Hell it self, excepting their duration? That some Sins shall be forgiven in the next World, I think, does not very evidently prove, that men shall be tormented, it may be for several Ages, in the Fire of Purgatory.

Thus they prove the necessity of Auricular Confession to a Priest, from the power of Judicial Absolution. Christ has given the Priest power to forgive Sins, and hereby has made him a Judge, to retain or remit Sins, to absolve and inflict Penances. Now a Judge cannot judge right, without a particular knowledge of the Fact, and all the circumstances of it; and this the Priest cannot know without the confession of the Penitent: and therefore as Priests have authority to absolve, so a Penitent, who would be absolved, must of necessity confess. But now I should think it a much better consequence, that the Priest has not such a judicial authority of Absolution, as requires a particular confession of the Penitent, because

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Christ has no where commanded all men to confess their Sins to a Priest, than that the Priest has such a judicial Authority, and therefore all men must confess to a Priest: for though our Saviour does give power to his Apostles to remit and retain sins, yet those words do not necessarily signify a judicial Authority to forgive Sins, or if it did, it may relate onely to publick Sins, which are too well known without a private confession; or however, it is not the particular knowledge of the Sin, with all the circumstances of it, but the marks and characters of true Repentance for publick or secret Sins, which is the best rule and direction whom to absolve; and therefore there is no need of a particular Confession to this purpose.

But the Sophistry of this is most palpable, when they draw such consequences from one Text of Scripture, as directly contradict other plain and express Texts. Thus because St. Peter tells us, That there are many things hard to be understood, in St. Paul's Epistles, *which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures to their own destruction*, 2 Pet. 3. 16. From hence they would conclude, that People ought not to be allowed to read the Bible: as if St. Peter had intended to forbid them to read those Epistles, which St. Paul had written to them; nay, to read this very Epistle which he himself now sent to them: For these Epistles which were sent to the Churches, that they might be read by them, make a considerable part of the New Testament, which the People must not be allowed to read now. But setting aside this, this consequence that the People must not read the Bible, is directly contrary to a great many other Texts, which expressly command them to read, and search, and study, and meditate on the Laws of God, and the Holy Scriptures, as every body knows. I confess it amazes me to hear men argue at this rate: when they can-

not produce any one Text which forbids People to read the Scriptures, and there are a great many express commands, that they should read the Scriptures, they think it sufficient to oppose against all this Authority, a consequence of their own making, and a very absurd one too, and call this a Scripture-proof.

I would not be thought wholly to reject a plain and evident consequence from Scripture; but yet I will never admit of a meer consequence to prove an Institution, which must be delivered in plain terms, as all Laws ought to be; and where I have no other proof, but some Scripture-consequences, I shall not think it equivalent to a Scripture-proof: if the consequences be plain and obvious, and such as every man sees, I shall not question it; but remote, and dubious, and disputed consequences, if we have no better evidence, to be sure are a very ill foundation for Articles of Faith. Let our Protestant then tell such Disputants, that for the Institution of Sacraments, and for Articles of Faith, he expects plain positive Proofs: that as much as the Protestant Faith is charged with uncertainty, we desire a little more certainty for our Faith, than meer inferences from Scripture, and those none of the plainest neither.

4. Another false pretence to Scripture-proofs is, to clap their own sense upon the words of Scripture, without any regard to the use and propriety of words, to the circumstances of the place, to the reason and nature of things; and to call this a Scripture-proof of their Doctrine, when their Doctrines do not naturally grow there, but are only engrafted by some cunning Artists, upon a Scripture-stock. I shall give you onely one instance of this, their Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

As for Transubstantiation, they teach, that the Elements of Bread and Wine are converted into the natural
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Flesh and Bloud of Christ, which was born of the Virgin *Mary* : That after Consecration there is nothing of the substance of Bread and Wine, but the Accidents subsist without a substance : That the natural Body of Christ his Soul and Divinity, are present under the species of Bread ; nay, that whole Christ, Flesh and Bloud, is under the species of Bread, and in every particle of it, and under the species of Wine, and every drop of it : That the Body of Christ is not broken, nor his Bloud shed in the Sacrament, but only the species of Bread and Wine, which are nothing : That it is only this Nothing which we eat and drink in the Sacrament, and which goes down into our stomachs, and carries whole Christ down with it. Now this Doctrine sounds so very harsh, is so contrary to all the Evidence of our Senses, and has so many Absurdities and Contradictions to Reason, that it ought to be very plainly proved from Scripture in every part of it : for if a man might be perswaded to renounce his Senses and Reason to believe Scripture, yet it ought to be equally evident to him at least, that Scripture is for it, as it is, that Sense and Reason is against it : and yet there is not one word in Scripture to prove any one part of this Doctrine of Transubstantiation : neither that the natural Flesh and Blood of Christ is in the Sacrament, nor that the substance of Bread and Wine does not remain after Consecration, nor that the Accidents of Bread and Wine, such as colour, smell, taste, quantity, weight, subsist without any substance, or subject to subsist in. These are such Paradoxes to Sense and Reason, that they ought to be very well supported with Scripture, before they are received for Articles of Faith, or else our Faith will be as very an Accident, without any substance, as the sacramental species themselves are. But though they have no Text which proves the least

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A Prefervative against P O P E R Y.

Title of all this, yet they have a Text whereon they graft this Doctrine of Transubstantiation, viz. *This is my Body*, which they say, signifies every thing which they teach concerning Transubstantiation; but then I hope they will prove that it does so, not expect that we should take it for granted, because they say it. Now, not to insist upon those Arguments, whereby our Divines have so demonstratively proved, that Transubstantiation, as explained by the Church of *Rome*, cannot be the sense of *This is my Body*, my advice to Protestants is to put them upon the proof, that this is the sense of it, which in reason they ought to prove, because there is not one word of it in the Text; and I shall only tell them what Proofs they ought to demand for it.

Now, I suppose, all men will think it reasonable, that the Evidence for it, should at least be equal to the Evidence against it, though we ought indeed to have more reason to believe it, than to dis-believe it; or else we must hang in suspense, when the Balance is equal and turns neither way. Now I will not oppose the Evidence of Sense and Reason, against the Authority of Scripture; for I will never suppose that they can contradict each other; and if there should appear some contradiction between them, I will be contented at present, without disputing that point, to give it on the side of Scripture; but I will oppose the Evidence of Sense and Reason against any private man's, or any Churches Exposition of Scripture: and if that Exposition they give of any Text of Scripture, as suppose, *This is my Body*, contradict the Evidence of Sense and Reason, I may modestly require as plain proof, that this is the meaning of the Text, as I have, that such a meaning is contrary to all Sense and Reason: for though Sense and Reason be not the Rule and Measure of Faith, yet we must
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use our Sense and Reason in expounding Scripture, or we may quickly make a very absurd and senseless Religion. .

Now this shews us what kind of Proof we must require, that Transubstantiation is the Doctrine of the Gospel, viz. as certain Proof as we have, that Transubstantiation is contrary to Sense and Reason. And therefore,

1. We must demand a self-evident Proof of this, because it is self-evident, that Transubstantiation contradicts Sense and Reason. Every man, who knows what the word means, (which I believe men may do, without being great Philosophers) and will consult his own Senses and Reason, will need no Arguments to prove, that Transubstantiation contradicts both. Now such a Scripture-Proof, I would see for Transubstantiation, so plain, and express, and self-evident, that no man, who understands the words, can doubt whether this be the meaning of them; I mean, a reasonable, not an obstinate, wilful, and sceptical doubting. Now I believe, that our Adversaries themselves will not say, that *This is my Body*, is such a self-evident Proof of Transubstantiation; I am sure some of the wisest men among them have not thought it so, and the same Disputes for so many Ages about the interpretation of those words, proves that it is not so: for men do not use to dispute what is self-evident, and prove it self without any other Arguments. Now it is very unreasonable to require any man to believe Transubstantiation against a self-evident Proof, that it is contrary to Sense and Reason, without giving him a self-evident Proof, that it is the Doctrine of Scripture: which is to require a man to believe against the best Reason and Evidence.

2. We must demand such a Scripture-Proof of Transubstantiation

substantiation, as cannot possibly signifie any thing else ; or else it will not answer that Evidence which we have against Transubstantiation : for Sense and Reason pronounce Transubstantiation to be naturally impossible ; and therefore unless it be as impossible to put any other sense upon Scripture than what signifies Transubstantiation, as it is to reconcile Transubstantiation to Sense and Reason; there is not such good Evidence for Transubstantiation, as against it. Were the Scripture-Proofs for Transubstantiation so plain and evident, that it were impossible to put any other sense on the words, then I would grant, that it is as impossible for those who believe the Scriptures to disbelieve Transubstantiation, as it is for those, who trust to their own Sense and Reason, to believe it. Here the difficulty would be equal on both sides, and then I should prefer a Divine Revelation (if it were possible to prove such a Revelation to be Divine) before natural Sense and Reason ; but I presume, no man will say, that it is impossible to put another, and that a very reasonable, interpretation upon those words, *This is my Body*, without expounding them to the sense of Transubstantiation.

Our Roman Adversaries do not deny, but that these words are capable of a figurative, as well as of a literal sense ; as when the Church is called the Body of Christ, Flesh of his Flesh, and Bone of his Bone, it is not meant of his natural, but his mystical Body : and thus when the Bread is called the Body of Christ, it may not signifie his natural, but sacramental Body, or his Body to all the ends and purposes of a Sacrament. Now if there be any other good sense to be made of these words, besides Transubstantiation, there cannot be such a necessity to expound them of Transubstantiation, as there is not to expound them of it ; for I do not reject Scripture, if

I deny Transubstantiation, when the words of Scripture do not necessarily prove it; but I renounce Sense and Reason, if I believe it. Now though I were bound to renounce my Sense and Reason, when they contradict Scripture, yet sure I am not bound to deny my Sense and Reason, when they do not contradict Scripture; and Sense and Reason are never contrary to Scripture, nor Scripture to them, when the words of Scripture are capable of such an interpretation as is reconcileable both to Sense and Reason: In such a case to expound Scripture contrary to Sense and Reason, is both to pervert the Scripture, and to contradict Reason, without any necessity. An unlearned man need not enter into a large Dispute about Transubstantiation; let him but require his Adversary to give him as plain Evidence, that Transubstantiation is the Doctrine of the Gospel, as he can give him, that it is contrary to Sense and Reason, and the Dispute will quickly be at an end. It had been very easy to have given more instances under every Head, and to have observed more false ways of expounding Scripture, which the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* are guilty of; but these are the most obvious, and therefore the best fitted to my design to instruct unlearned men; and I must not suffer this Discourse, which was at first intended much shorter than it already is, to swell too much under my hands.

S E C T. III.

Concerning the Ancient Fathers and Writers of the Christian Church.

THough Learned men may squabble about the Sense of Fathers and Councils, it is very unreasonable, that Unlearned men should be concerned in such

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Disputes,

Disputes, because they are not competent Judges of it; and yet there is nothing which our Roman Disputants make a greater noise with, among Women and Children, and the meanest sort of People, than Quotations out of Fathers and Councils, whom they pretend to be all on their side. Now as it is a ridiculous thing for them to talk of Fathers and Councils to such People, so it is very ridiculous for such People to be converted by Sayings out of the Fathers and Councils : I confess, it has made me often smile, with a mixture of pity and indignation, at the folly of it; for what more contemptible easiness can any man be guilty of, than to change his Religion which he has been taught out of the Scriptures, and may find there if he pleases, because he is told by some honest Priest, (a sort of men who never deceive any one) that such or such a Father, who lived it may be they know not where nor when, and wrote they know not what, has spoke in favour of Transubstantiation, or Purgatory, or some other Popish Doctrine.

And therefore let me advise our Protestant, who is not skilled in these matters, when he is urged with the Authority of Fathers, to ask them some few Questions.

1. Ask them, How you shall certainly know what the Judgment of the Fathers was? and this includes a great many Questions, which must be resolved, before you can be sure of this, as, How you shall know that such Books were written by that Father, whose name it bears? or that it has not been corrupted by the ignorance or knavery of Transcribers, while they were in the hands of Monks, who usurped great Authority over the Fathers, and did not only pare their Nails, but altered their very Habit and Dress, to fit them to the modes of the

the times, and make them fashionable? How you shall know what the true meaning of those words are, which they cite from them? which the words themselves many times will not discover, without the Context: How you shall know that such Sayings are honestly quoted, or honestly translated? How you shall know whether this Father did not in other places contradict what he here says? or did not alter his opinion after he had wrote it, without writing publick Recantations, as St. *Austin* did? Whether this Father was not contradicted by other Fathers? And in that case, Which of the Fathers you must believe?

You may add, That you do not ask these Questions at random, but for great and necessary Reasons: for in reading some late English Books both of Protestants and Papists, you find large Quotations out of the Fathers on both sides; that some are charged with false Translations, with perverting the Fathers sense, with mis-citing his words, with quoting spurious Authors, as it seems many of those are which make up the late *Speculum*, or Ecclesiastical Prospective-glass; to name no more. Now how shall you, who are an unlearned man, judge of such Disputes as these? What Books are spurious or genuine? whether the Fathers be rightly quoted? and what the true sense of them is? For my part, I know not what Answer such a Disputant could make, but to blush, and promise not to alledge the Authority of Fathers any more. It is certain, in such matters, those who are unlearned, must trust the learned; and then, I suppose, an unlearned Protestant will rather trust a Protestant than a Popish Doctor, as Papists will rather trust their Priests than Protestant Divines; and then there is not much to be got on either side, this way: For when a Protestant shews an inclination rather to believe a Popish than a

A Preservative against POPERY.

Protestant Divine, he is certainly three quarters a Papist before hand.

Indeed unlearned Protestants, who are inquisitive, and have time to read, have such advantages now to satisfy themselves even about the sense of Fathers and Councils, as it may be no Age before ever afforded; there being so many excellent Books written in *English*, as plainly confirm the Protestant Faith, and confute Popery, by the Testimonies and Authorities of Ancient Writers; and such men, though they do not understand *Latine* and *Greek*, are in no danger of all the Learning of their Popish Adversaries: and any man who pleases, may have recourse to such Books, and see the State of the Controversie with his own eyes, and judge for himself; but those who cannot do this, may very fairly decline such a Trial, as improper for them. For,

2. Let our Protestant ask such Disputers, whether a plain man may not attain a sufficient knowledge and certainty of his Religion, without understanding Fathers and Councils? If they say he cannot, ask them, how many Roman-Catholicks there are that understand Fathers and Councils? Ask them, how those Christians understood their Religion, who lived before there were any of these Fathers and Councils? Ask them again, whether they believe that God has made it impossible to the greatest part of Mankind, to understand the Christian Religion? For even among Christians themselves, there is not one in an hundred thousand, who understands Fathers and Councils, and it is morally impossible they should: and therefore certainly there must be a shorter and easier way to understand Christian Religion than this, or else the generality of Mankind, even of protest Christians, are out of all possibility of Salvation. Ask them once more, Whether it be not a much easier matter for a plain honest man to learn;

learn all things necessary to Salvation, out of the Scriptures themselves, especially with the help of a wise and learned Guide, than to understand all Fathers and Councils, and take his Religion from them? Why then do they so quarrel at Peoples reading the Scriptures, and put them upon reading Fathers and Councils? I suppose they will grant, the Scriptures may be read a little sooner than so many Voluminous Fathers, and Labbe's Councils into the bargain; and, I believe, most men, who try, will think, that they are more easily understood; and therefore if Protestants, as they pretend, can have no certainty of the true sense of Scripture, I am sure there is much less certainty to be had from the Fathers: A short time will give us a full view of the Scriptures, to read and understand all the Fathers, is work enough for a man's life: the Scripture is all of a piece, every part of it agrees with the rest; the Fathers many times contradict themselves and each other: and if men differ about the sense of Scripture, they differ much more about Fathers and Councils. That it is a mighty Riddle, that those who think ordinary Christians not fit to read the Scriptures, should think it necessary for them to understand Fathers and Councils; and yet they are ridiculous, indeed to dispute with every Tradesman about Fathers and Councils, if they do not think they ought to read and understand them.

The sum is, such Protestants as are not skilled in Book-learning, may very reasonably tell these Men, who urge them with the Authority of Councils and Fathers, That they do not pretend to any skill in such matters, and hope it is not required of them, for if it be, they are in an ill case: the Holy Scriptures, not Fathers and Councils, is the Rule of their Faith; if they had read the Fathers, they should believe them no farther, than what they taught

taught was agreeable to Scripture ; and therefore whatever Opinions any of the Fathers had, it is no concern of theirs to know, if they can learn what the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles was, without it : learned men may dispute about these things ; and they have heard learned Protestants affirm, that the Church of *Rome* can find none of her peculiar Doctrines in the Writings of any of the Fathers for the first three hundred years ; and it's certain, if this be true, all the later Fathers are of no Authority to establish any new Doctrine ; for there was no more Authority in the Church, to bring in any new Doctrines, after three hundred years, than there is at this day.

Unlearned men may very honourably reject all dispute about Fathers and Councils, (though learned men cannot, and indeed need not ;) for if they are not bound to read Fathers and Councils, I think, they are not bound to understand them, nor to dispute about them ; and it is very unadvisably done, when they do : for it is past a Jest in so serious a matter, though otherwise it were comical enough, for men to be converted by Fathers and Councils, without understanding them.

C H A P. III.

How to Answer some of the most popular Pretences urged by Papists against Protestants.

S E C T. I.

I. Concerning the Uncertainty of the Protestant Faith.

OUR Popish Adversaries of late, have not so much disputed, as fenced; have neither down-right opposed the Protestant Faith, nor vindicated their own, but have betaken themselves to some tricks and amusements, to divert and perplex the Dispute, and to impose upon the ignorant and unwary. One of their principal Arts has been to cry out of the Uncertainty of the Protestant Faith. This every body is nearly concerned in; for there is nothing wherein certainty is so necessary, and so much desired, as in matters of Religion, whereon our eternal State depends. This has been often answered by Protestants, and I do not intend to enter into the merits of the Cause, and shew upon what a firm and sure bottom the Protestant Faith stands: this is a Cavil easily enough exposed to the scorn and contempt of all considering men, without so much trouble:

For 1. Suppose the Protestant Faith were uncertain, How is the Cause of the Church of *Rome* ever the better? Is this a sufficient reason to turn Papists, because Protestants are uncertain? Does this prove the Church of *Rome* to be Infallible, because the Church of *England* is Fallible? Must Certainty necessarily be found among them, because

cause it is not to be found with us? Is *Thomas* an honest man, because *John* is a Knave? These are two distinct Questions, and must be distinctly proved. If they can prove our Faith uncertain, and their own certain, there is reason then to go over to them; but if they cannot do this, they may, it may be, persuade men to renounce the Protestant Faith, but not to embrace Popery. Ask them then, What greater assurance they have of their Faith, than we have of ours? If they tell you, their Church is Infallible; tell them, that is another Question, and does not belong to this Dispute. For the Infallibility of their Church, does not follow from the Uncertainty of our Faith; if they can prove their Church Infallible, whether they prove our Faith Uncertain or not, we will at any time change Protestant Certainty for Infallibility: And if they could prove our Faith uncertain, unless they could prove their own more certain, (though we hate them Infallibility) we may cease to be Protestants, but shall never turn Papists.

2. Ask them, What they mean by the Uncertainty of the Protestant Faith? For this may signifie two things: either, 1. That the Objects of our Faith are in themselves uncertain, and cannot be proved by certain Reasons: Or 2dly, That our Perswasion about these matters, is uncertain and wavering. If they mean the first, then the fence is, that the Christian Religion is an uncertain thing, and cannot be certainly proved; for this is the whole Protestant Faith: We believe the Apostles Creed, and whatever is contained in the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, and this is all we believe. And I hope, they will not say these things are uncertain; for then they renounce the Christian Religion, and Infallibility it self cannot help them out: for Infallibility cannot make that certain, which is in it self uncertain:

an infallible man must know things as they are, or else he is mistaken, and ceases to be infallible; and therefore what is certain, he infallibly knows to be certain, and what is uncertain, he infallibly knows to be uncertain: for the most certain and infallible knowledge does not change its Object, but sees it just as it is: And therefore they must allow the Objects of our Faith, or the Protestant Faith, as to the matter of it, to be very certain, and built upon certain reason, or else their infallible Church can have no certainty of the Christian Faith.

If they mean the second thing, that we have no certain persuasion about what we profess to believe: This is a great abuse to Protestants, as if they were all Knaves and Hypocrites, who do not heartily and firmly believe what we profess to believe: and a Protestant, who knows that he does very firmly and stedfastly believe his Religion, ought to reject such a Villanous Accusation as this, with indignation and scorn. Indeed it is both impudent and silly for any man to tell a Protestant, that his Faith is uncertain, (as that signifies an uncertain and doubtful Perswasion) when he knows and feels the contrary; and no body else can know this but himself: In what Notion then is the Protestant Faith uncertain? what can Faith signifie, but either the Objects of Faith, or the internal Assent and Perswasion? The Objects of our Faith are certain, if Christian Religion be so, that is, they have very certain Evidence: our Assent and Perswasion is very certain, as that is opposed to all doubtfulness and wavering: And what certainty then is wanting to the Protestant Faith?

When then you hear any of these men declaiming about the uncertainty of the Protestant Faith, onely ask them, What they mean by the Protestant Faith? whether the Articles of your Faith, that they are uncertain,

or the Act of Faith, your internal Assent and Perswasion? If they say, they mean the Act of Faith: Tell them, that it is a strange presumption in them to pretend to know your Heart; that you know that best your self, whether you do firmly and stedfastly believe your Religion; and to give them satisfaction in that point, you assure them, that you do: As for the Objects of your Faith, or what it is you Believe, tell them, you are a Member of the Church of *England*, and embrace the Doctrine of it, and there they may find your Faith both as a Christian, and as a Protestant; and may try their skill on it, when they please, to prove any part of it uncertain, and you are ready to defend it. This is a plain and fair Answer, and I believe you will hear no more of them.

For as for their common Argument to prove the Uncertainty of the Protestant Faith, That there is a great variety of Opinions among Protestants, and that they condemn one another with equal confidence and assurance, Ask them, how this proves your Faith to be Uncertain, either as to its Object, or as to its Assent? May not what you believe, be very certainly true, because some men believe the contrary? Tell them, you do not place the certainty of what you believe, upon any man's believing, or not believing it, but upon the certain Reasons you have to prove it: and therefore if they would convince you, that what you believe is not certain, they must disprove your Reasons. not merely tell you, that other men think it false or uncertain, and believe otherwise: Thus does it prove, that you give an uncertain and doubtful Assent to what you profess to believe, because other men are very fully persuaded of the contrary? Pray tell them, that you do not build your Assent upon other mens Perswasions, but upon the Reasons of your Faith, and while they are unshaken, you

A Preservative against **POPERY.**

83

you shall believe as you do, and with the same assurance, whoever believes otherwise.

There are two things indeed, which this Argument proves, but they signify nothing to weaken the Protestant Faith.

1. That all the Doctrines which are professed by some Protestants, are not certain; for some of them must be false, when there are contradictory Doctrines maintained and professed by several Sects of Protestants; but then no man, that I know of, ever said, that all Protestant Doctrines were certain; which I hope does not hinder but that some Protestant Doctrines may be certain; and then the Doctrines of the Church of *England* may be certain, though some other Communions of Protestants have erred.

2. This Argument proves also, that men who are mistaken, may be very confidently perswaded of their mistakes, and therefore the confidence of perswasion does not prove the certainty of their Faith; and I never heard any man say that it did: But I hope this does not prove that a man, who is certain upon evident Reasons, must be mistaken too, because men, who are certain without Reason, may mistake.

And yet this very Argument, from the different and contrary Opinions among Protestants to prove the uncertainty of the Protestants Faith, signifies nothing, as to our Disputes with the Church of *Rome*: For ask them, what they would think of the Protestant Faith, were all Protestants of a mind? Would their Consent and Agreement prove the Certainty of the Protestant Faith? Then the Protestant Faith, in opposition to Popery, is very certain: for they all agree in condemning the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*; and thus I think they get nothing by this Argument: for if the

Dissentions of Protestants proves the uncertainty of their Faith, as to such matters, wherein they differ, then by the same Rule their Agreement in opposition to Popery, shews their great certainty in such matters: And this I suppose is no great Inducement to a Protestant to turn Papist.

S E C T. II.

Concerning Protestant Mis-representations of Popery.

THIS has been another late Artifice of our Roman Adversaries to amuse ignorant People with a great noise of Mis-representing: That Protestant Divines have painted Popery in such horrid shapes, as to disturb the Imaginations of People, and to beget an incurable Aversion in them against Popery, without understanding what it is. I shall not now dispute this matter over again: there has been so much of late said of it, and this Pretence so shamefully baffled, in answer both to the Representer, and to Monsieur *De Meaux's* Exposition, that I am apt to think, they themselves could be very glad that it had never been mentioned, or could now be forgot; and therefore referring the inquisitive Readers to those late Books, wherein they will find this Controversie fairly stated; I have some few things to add, which are plain and obvious to every body; and that both with reference to the Probability of this Charge, and to the Consequences of it.

First, As to the Probability of this Charge. Now, 1. Ask them, whether the first Reformers charged the Church of *Rome* with such Doctrines and Practices as they were not guilty of? We have not, that I know of,

of, increased our Charge against the Church of *Rome* in this Age; if there has been any difference, we have rather been more favourable and candid in our Censures of some of their Doctrines, than the first Reformers were. Now is it likely, that the first Reformers should charge the Church of *Rome* wrongfully? No man can be a Mis-representer, but either out of Ignorance or Design; which of these then can we; with any Probability, charge the first Reformers with?

As for Ignorance, is it a probable thing, that *Luther, Melancthon, Oecolampadius, Zuinglius, Bucer, Calvin*; or to come to our own English Reformers, that Archbishop *Cranmer*, and others, who had all been Papists themselves, should be ignorant what was taught and practised in the Church of *Rome*? It is now thought in this very Cause, a very considerable Proof, that Protestants do Mis-represent Papists, because some Papists deny such Doctrines and Practices as Protestants charge them with; and, say they, can you think that Papists do not understand their own Religion better than Protestants do? Now though this may be made a Question, and I am very apt to think, that compare the Learned and the Unlearned Protestants and Papists together, there are more Protestants than Papists, who understand Popery: and not onely Experience verifies this; but there is a plain reason why it should be so; because it is the Principle of Protestants, that they must neither believe nor disbelieve any thing, without understand it; but an implicate Faith in the Church, governs the unlearned Papists, and many of those who should be learned too.

But let that be as it will, this Argument signifies nothing to our first Reformers: for if Papists may be presumed

A Preservative against POPERY.

Dissentions of Protestants proves the un-^{der}standing of their Faith, as to such matters, wherein they might be as by the same Rule their Agreement in Popery shews their great error: this I suppose is no reason to suspect that they turn Papist.

It is not probable, that they should Mis-represent themselves, that Popery was not so bad as they represent it to be, why should they themselves have set up for Reformers? and what hope could they have, that at that time, when Popery was so well known, they should persuade the World to believe their Misrepresentations?

Was it so desirable a thing for men to bring all the Powers of the Church and Court of Rome upon themselves, merely to gratifie a Mis-representing humour? Do these men remember what our Reformers suffered, for opposing Popery? the loss of their Estates, their Liberties, their Lives, all the Vengeance of a blind and enraged Zeal: And did they undergo all this with such constancy and Christian patience, only for the sake of telling Lyes, and raising scandalous Reports of the Church of Rome? We think it a very good Argument, that the Apostles and first Preachers of Christianity were very honest men, and had no design to cheat the World, because they served no worldly Interest by it; but cheerfully exposed themselves to all manner of Sufferings in Preaching the Gospel: and why does not the same Argument prove our first Reformers to be honest men, and then they could not be wilful Mis-representers?

Nay, if we will but allow them to have been cunning men (and it is evident, they did not want wit) they would never have undertaken so hopeless a design, as to run down Popery

opery meerly by Mis-representing it; when, had their Exceptions against Popery been only Mis-representations of their own, all the World could have confuted them: had the Reformers been onely Mis-representers, can we think, that they could have imposed upon such vast numbers of Men, Learned and Unlearned, who knew and saw what Popery was? They were no Fools themselves, and therefore could not hope to impose such a Cheat upon the World.

2. Ask them again, How old this Complaint is, of Protestant Mis-representations of Popery? how long it has been discovered, that Popery has been thus Abused and Mis-represented? were the first Reformers charged with these Mis-representations by their Adversaries in those days? did they deny, that they gave Religious Worship to Saints, and Angels, and the Virgin *Mary*, to Images and Reliques? did they cry out of Mis-representations, when they were charged with such Doctrines and Practices as these? or did they defend them, and endeavour to answer those Arguments which the Reformers brought against them? And yet methinks if Popery had been so grossly Mis-represented by the Reformers, this would as soon have been discovered by the Learned Papists of those days, as by our late Representer; but it is most likely they did not then think Popery so much Mis-represented, for if they had, they would certainly have complained of it: So that the high improbability of the thing, is a sufficient Reason to Unlearned Protestants, to reject this Charge of Protestant Mis-representations of Popery, as nothing else but a Popish Calumny against Protestants; and to conclude, that if Popery be Mis-represented now, it is onely by themselves, and that is the very truth of the Case.

Secondly.

Secondly, Let us consider this Charge of Mis-representations in the Consequences of it: It would a little puzzle a man to guess, what service they intend to do the Church of *Rome* by it. For,

1. By complaining of such Mis-representations of Popery, they plainly confess, that those Doctrines and Practices, which we charge the Church of *Rome* with, are very bad, and fit to be rejected and abhorred of all Christians. This the Representer himself confesses, and is very Copious and Rhetorical upon it. Now this is of mighty dangerous consequence; for if it appears, that we have not Mis-represented them, that the Doctrines and Practices we charge them with, are truly the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, then by their own confession, Popery is a very bad Religion, and to be rejected by Christians: Then there was a very just reason for our Separation from the Church of *Rome*, and we are no longer either Schismatics or Hereticks; and if the Cause be put upon this Issue, we need desire no better Vindication of the Church of *England*: for if they cannot prove us Hereticks or Schismatics, till they can prove us Mis-representers, I believe, we are pretty secure for this Age.

2. These men, who complain so much of Mis-representing, endeavour to make the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, look as like Protestant Doctrines, as possibly they can, as if there were little or no difference between them: Now methinks this is no great reason for a Protestant to turn Papist, that the Popish Faith is so much the better, the nearer it comes to the Protestant Faith. The truth is, the chief Mystery in this late Trade of Representing and Mis-representing, is no more but this, to joyn a Protestant Faith with Popish Practices; to believe as Protestants do, and do as Papists do. As to give
some

Some few instances of this in the Papist Mis-represented and Represented.

The Papist Represented, believes it damnable to Worship Stocks and Stones for Gods; to Pray to Pictures or Images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, or any other Saints. This is good Protestant Doctrine: but then this Papist says his Prayers before an Image, Kneels and Bows before it, and pays all external Acts of Adoration to Christ and the Saints, as represented by their Images; though it is not properly the Image he honours, but Christ and his Saints by the Images. Which is down-right Popery in Practice.

Thus he believes it is a most damnable Idolatry, to make Gods of men, either living or dead. Which is the Protestant Faith: but yet he prays to Saints, and begs their Intercession, without believing them to be Gods, or his Redeemers; which is Popery in Practice.

He believes it damnable, to think the Virgin Mary more powerful in Heaven than Christ. Which is Protestant Doctrine: but yet he prays to Her oftner than either to God or Christ, says ten Ave-Maries for one Pater Noster; which is a Popish Devotion.

He believes it unlawful to commit Idolatry, and most damnable to Worship any Breaden God. Which is spoke like a Protestant; but yet he pays Divine Adoration to the Sacrament, which is done like a Papist. And thus in most of those thirty seven Particulars of the double Characters of a Papist Mis-represented, his great Art is to Reconcile a Protestant Faith with Popish Practices.

So that this New way of Representing Popery, is no reason to a Protestant to alter his Faith, because, it seems, they believe in many things just as we do; but, I think, it is a very great reason for a Papist to alter his Practice, because a Protestant Faith and Popish Worship do not very well agree. Those who would not make Gods of

Stocks and Stones, of dead Men and Women, had certainly better not Worship them, which is the most certain way not to make them Gods; and those who think it such damnable Idolatry to Worship *a Breaden God*, in my Opinion, are on the safer side not to Worship the visible Species of Bread in the Eucharist. Let but our Protestant observe *this*, That when they would Represent Popery most favourably, they either say what Protestants do, or something as like it, as they can, and he will see no reason, either to change his Faith or his Practice.

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THE
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READER.

I Have heard it often observed, that it would be a Work worth any ingenious Man's pains, and very acceptable to the World, to take a View of the whole Controversie betwixt the Writers of the Church of Rome and us since his Majesties coming to the Crown; and to compare it with the Management of this same Controversie at the beginning of the Reformation, and through the late Reigns, I am assured it would make such a Discovery of the present Controvertists of that Church, as would make all them to blush that have any Modesty, and the World to blush for them that have none.

It is very well known, that when the Reformation began, Learning was at a very Low Ebb, and they of the Church of Rome, who were commanded to defend it against the Reformers, had a very hard Task of it, since they were engaged in matters wholly new to them; and, which was worse, in the Defence of a Cause which did want Arguments ten thousand times better than any could be gotten for it. However, to their Credit be it spoken, they undertook the matter fairly, and were so just to their Adversaries, as well
as

To the Reader.

as to their own Cause, as to answer Book with Book, and not to drop their Weapon, and run away after the first little Charge.

But we have a quite contrary sort of Men to deal with now-a-days; they write as if the Controversie had but just begun, and as if they had not read so much as their own old Authors; but after one little Effort, fall to Sheet and Half-sheet Replies, as if they that furnished them with the first Book, could not have furnished them also with a Fair Reply. It is a very broad Sign that some Men came very unprepared to this Controversie, and that it was a perfect Surprise to them, who dreamt surely of nothing less than of sending and proving, they have been so untoward at it.

And this is that which hath made this present Controversie so very mischievous unto them; for some of their own Laity could not but own that the answering of large Books by Sheet, or a Half-sheet, did not appear fair, but that it was very like it, if not a direct betraying of their Cause: And this was too apt to raise Suspensions, either that their Priests could not defend their Cause, or that their Cause was such as was not to be defended. It were easie to give the Reader many Instances of this Kind: When the Six Conferences concerning the Eucharist were published, a Book written with so much strength of Reason and Solidity, and which bore so very hard upon their great Doctrine of Transubstantiation, as to undertake to demonstrate that it did overthrow the Proofs of Christian Religion; we might have expected that the Romish Priests would have been justly alarm'd at such a Book of so threatening a Nature to their Darling Transubstantiation, and would have employed the best Heads among them to answer so dangerous a Book; but as if they had all been asleep, the World is presented with a drowsie Half-sheet at last against a Book of about eighteen Sheets; as if Yawning were to pass for Answering.

When

To the Reader.

When that excellent Book, The Second Defence of the Exposition against the Bishop of Meaux and his Vindicator was Printed, and did so largely and so effectually prove all the former Charges against the wretched prevarications of that Bishop, and his Vindicator ; Was it not a very pleasant-thing to see a Sheet and a half Printed against it, with the pompous Title, of a full Answer to it ? But I cannot be angry at the Man, for all the World is satisfied that he is sick of that Controversie ; and that a Sheet and a half was enough in Conscience for a man in his Condition. He did indeed about the same time threaten the learned Author of the Discourse against Extreme Unction, with a Sheet against his Book ; wherein he would take it to pieces : But I suppose he was half asleep when he made that promise, and quite forgot it upon his first sleep. It is ten to one, but some of their party will rouse up this doughty Champion, and tell him, that now he may venture to write his Sheet against that Book, since there is no fear of an Answer from the Author of that Discourse, who is now in his Grave : but if I might be of Counsel to him, I would advise him to think twice before he ventures on his Sheet-Answer ; for though the Incomparable and never-to-be-forgotten Dr. Clagett, the Author of that Book be (to our unspeakable loss) in his Grave, yet neither his Book, nor his Memory, nor his Friends are buried with him ; and though that Book is more than able to defend it self against so very weak an Adversary, yet were it not, I am told, that let our Adversaries begin as soon as they please, either against that or any other of his many excellent Discourses against Popery. ; they will find, that there are too many Friends to the Memory and Reputation of that Pious and Learned Champion of the Church of England, to suffer any thing against Him to lye unanswered : And I cannot fancy but some People are my bumble Servants for this kind hint, who do not love to burn their Fingers.

To the Reader.

I will but mention one other instance of our Adversaries extravagant behaviour in this kind, against that Book, the Defence of which I am intrusted to publish, the celebrated PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY: how very acceptable to the World this excellent Tract was, the universal entertainment it met with, and the many thousands of it so greedily bought up, do sufficiently shew? how much the Book did in it self deserve all that kindness it found, every Reader will soon discover, that will but give himself the trouble to read any one page of it. I must confess, I have been mightily pleased, that our Adversaries themselves can find how very good a Book it is. I hear some of them rail unmeasurably at it, and are at a loss sometimes how to vent themselves more passionately against it: and this I take for as infallible a sign, that this Book is a very good one, as I would the least commendation of theirs, for its being a very dull one.

This Book then, which the Commendations of all our own Church, and the bitter Revilings of some of our Adversaries have made so conspicuous, and attested its great worth, did deserve a very skilful Manager (if they must be answering it) to pull down all the worthy Doctor had with so much Skill and Accuracy been building against them; did call for one who could answer with the same Solidity, Clearness and Wit that the Doctors Book had been written with. But as if this Book had been one of the dullest pieces that was published on our part, a Jesuit, (that is famous for something) is employ'd to answer it; and as if there had been no reason, nor sense, nor any thing for an Adversary to fasten upon in the PRESERVATIVE, the Jesuit gives us an Answer of a Sheet, as thinking that enough, or too much to employ against a Book that had nothing in it.

*But this Jesuit is one of the most unlucky men that ever ventur'd upon Controversie; for as all the world did grant
that*

To the Reader.

that this was a ridiculous Answer to so Great a Book, so it raised the Indignation of most Men against it, to see a Jesuit trifling in a matter of so great concern, and nibbling at a Book, the least Paragraph of which he is utterly unable to Answer. This is that, I believe, which provoked the honest Footman to Write this Reply to the Jesuites Answer to the Doctors PRESERVATIVE; for he found the Jesuit had Written in such a strain of Sense and Reason together, as if he had intended to enter the lists with some such Person as himself, and not with the Excellent Master of the Temple: and I do not wonder that the honest Footman could not resist the Temptation of catching the Jesuit at such an advantage, and of taking this so favourable an Opportunity of having a certain Victory over him; this would have tempted a more Learned Man, but I am well enough pleased that the honest young Footman has the glory of it.

One would have expected that when the Jesuit undertook to Answer so large a Book as the Preservative in so little room, he would have fallen immediately upon the Book he was Answering: but he it seems thought he had room to call others to account too in that small compass; and does very severely fall upon all our Reformers in general, as well as some Authors alive in particular.

The Honest Footman does confine himself in his Reply to the Defence of the PRESERVATIVE it self, and lets the Jesuites Preface alone, as nothing to the purpose indeed there: but I am willing to have a word or two with him about it, and see how the Reformers and those Men are concerned here in an Answer to Dr. SHERLOCKS PRESERVATIVE.

The Jesuit at first dash accuses our Reformers of falling presently [when they set up for opposers of Popery] to forgeries, clipping of Texts, Fathers and Councils:

To the Reader.

but forgets in his fury to give the Reader one instance of any Forgery, or clipping of Text, Father or Council. He should not have forgotten to have done this, since the World will be ready enough to believe that it was not for any good will that he did omit them, but that all the reason was, that though he had malice enough to accuse them of it, yet that he wanted means to prove it upon them. But this accusation they find to be absolutely necessary, because our Men do so often accuse them of those very things, and they are not for being behind-hand in such charges, true or false it makes no matter, the thing must be done to keep off some way or other so severe a blow. The Accusations run high on both sides, and the Reader hath this certain way of knowing where the guilt lyes; that the Church of Rome accuse us, but do not prove it, but our Men do not only accuse them, but prove it upon them.

For a clear Proof of this we need look no further than this Jesuit himself, who of all Men living should have kept his Pen from such an Accusation, since he knows one that lyes under the severe charge of many such things. This very Jesuit is the Person so famous for the Controversie about a Sermon of St. Austins betwixt him and One of our learned Writers, who did not only prove that that Sermon which the Jesuit had quoted in a Prayer before Sermon was a Forgery, but that the Authors he brought afterwards to defend himself with, were neither better nor worse than down-right Forgeries; I have given my self the trouble for the worlds sake of examining that Controversie, and find that the 14th Sermon de Sanctis urged by the Jesuit is a

** See the First and Second Letters to Lewis Sabran Jesuit.*

*Forgery; that the 18th of the same sort is a Forgery, that his S. Hieroms Sermon * was a Forgery, that his Hephonsus was a Forgery, that his Mallion's Sermon was a Forgery, that his Story about Juvenal and Marcian the Emperour was a Forgery.*

And

To the Reader.

*And in a Controversie betwixt these two, not above a month ago, about Invocation of Saints, I find our Author charging the Jesuit with the same things or worse, * that his first Author was suppositions ;* * See the Third Letter to Sabran the Jesuit. *that he had not only clipt that Authors words, but brought them in to prove that very thing, for the confuting of which the Author had himself intended them : that he had put down a Prayer to the Virgin Mary, as out of that Author, not a syllable of which was to be found there ; that the Jesuit had falsified his next quotation from S. Cyril ; that his Nestarius upon Theodore was a Forgery ; that his Prayers to the Virgin Mary from Methodius, from Ephrem Syrus, from Athanasius and from Leo were Forgeries ; that Gregory Nazianzens Prayer to her was a Forgery ; that his Proofs from S. Ambrose, from Gregory Nazianzens Iambicks were Forgeries ; that his Proof from the Council of Chalcedon was clipt and abused ; that his Quotations from the Council of Laodicea, Gangræ and Carthage were every one of them misrepresented, and abused ; I must confess I was amazed at such a mass of Forgeries in so little room, and could not have thought it possible that any Man that pretends to the least knowledge in Books could be guilty of such things , much less that this very Jesuit could have been the Man, who is so very ready to accuse others (though most falsely) of it.*

He next falls upon particular men, and begins with Dr. Comber, whose Book he says, was first set forth by him in the time of the pretended Plot, and is so full of false Quotations, that they can be produced by Dozens.

But these things should not have been asserted so boldly, for the Author of that Book printed it first in 1674. which is four years sooner than our Jesuit (who it seems knows better than he) will have it ; and a third Edition of it with all the Quotations, was Licensed before the end of 1676.

POSTSCRIPT.

I Must not forget to advertise the Reader, that as to those Quotations out of *Latin* or *Greek Authors*, which the Young Man is far from understanding, as he declares in his Book, and therefore might justly be suspected to have been added by some other hand; (Upon my enquiry) He told me he had that from *Nicephorus*, out of the Preface to *White's Way to the Church*, and the rest from *Alliaco*, *Scotus* and *Tonstal* out of the Book it self, *Digression* 49th, *numb. 9.* where I suppose any inquisitive Reader may find them.

I

A
D E F E N C E
O F
Dr. SHERLOCK's Preservative
A G A I N S T
P O P E R Y,
I N

Reply to a *JESUITS* Answer.

TO begin then with Dr. *Sherlock's* Principles, which *overthrow all right use of common Sense*: For the first, the Answerer tells us it is Page the Third, and there I find the Doctor blaming the Church of *Rome* for not suffering her people to *Dispute their Religion, or to read Heretical Books, nay not so much as to look into the Bible it self*; which he Repeats thus, *They will not allow the reading Heretical Books*, leaving out what was said of the Bible, it being too hot for him; he could not deny the Fact, nor had courage enough to defend it, but saith,

C His

2 *A Defence of Dr. Ss. Preservative*

His reason cannot teach him how God should require the Reading of Heretical Books; and so takes it for granted, that all the Writings of our Divines are so, nay and the Bible it self too, if he will keep to the Doctors words. Well but there are some Ministers (in the Moon possibly, for we cannot learn where) that use all endeavours to hinder their Flock from hearing Catholick Sermons and reading Catholick Books. Catholick Sermons, blessed be God; we do or may hear, every Lords day at least, yea and read Catholick Books too; ay! but he means Roman Catholick Books and Sermons, let it be so, and desire him to tell you who it is that ever forbid his People to hear a Sermon or read one of their Books, I confess this ought to be done with caution, knowing we have to do with them who make it their practice to deceive. For my part I gladly profess myself a Member, though an unworthy one, of the Church of England, and hope God will ever give me grace to do it: and I have, according to the liberty which God and that Church hath given me, read several Books, not refusing his Catholick ones, not being contented with an Implicit Faith, especially when I read in the Saered Scripture, a command to be ready to give an Answer to every one that should ask a Question of the Hope which is in us, to try the Spirits, and to try all things, and the like; and I know not but I may still do the same, as that small allowance of time, which one in my circumstances can expect, will afford me, for as Dionysius Alexandrinus saith (Niceph. l. 6. c. 8.) He used sometimes to be occupied in reading the Writings and Treatises of Hereticks, though to something polluted his mind with touching their unclean Opinions, because he reaped this profit thereby, that he might the easier reject them, and the more execrate and detest them.

against a Jesuite.

3

Preservative against Popery, page the fourth) *Ask them whether they will allow you to judge for your selves in matters of Religion, if they will not, why will they trouble you with disputing, you cannot be convinc'd unless you judge too, and thereby resolve Faith into a private Spirit. ----- Here let our Protestant fix his Foot, and not stir an inch till they disown Infallibility; and confess, that every man can and must judge for himself, in matters of Religion, according to the proofs that are offer'd to him.*

Answerer, This is to say, 'Tis impossible to convince a man that in reason he ought to submit his judgment to that of any other though Infalible. But how doth this inference follow, it appears plain and natural to me, that I may submit my judgment to an infallible Judge, and yet the Church of Rome may not be that judge; must I submit my sense and reason to be govern'd by the Pope, or else own it impossible to be convinced by reason that I may do it to an infallible Judge. Upon my word, sir, if you will but prove your Church Infalible, I'll immediately forsake that Church which at present I think my self very happy in, for yours. Doth this pretty Logic, as you call it, make void all the right use of common sense and reason, when it should lead us to submit to any just Authority; surely no, but argues that we may make use of them to judge betwixt a just Authority and an Imposture that usurps that name. The Doctor doth not take the *Jews part against St. Paul*, nor bid us not harken to him till he disown *Infallibility*, 'tis the product of your own brain: when you can give us such proofs for your Infalibility, as he did, we shall own it, till then we are content to be in the number of your Hereticks.

4 *A Defence of Dr. S's. Preservative*

Preservative, Folio 6. *What difference is there between Mens using their private Judgments to turn Papists, or to turn Protestants? The Answerer tells us, Page the 4. That 'tis the same as between two sick Men, the one whereof chooseth to put himself in an able Doctors hands, whom he knows to have an infallible Remedy, whilst the other chooseth his own Simples, and make his own Medicine.* Well, and is not here private judgment used all this while? doth not he that puts himself into this able Doctors hands, use his private judgment as well as the other? and is not the Doctor as much obliged to him for it; for if he did not use his judgment how could he find out this able Doctor, or know that he had an infallible Remedy? So that what Dr. Sberlock said is true, *That you are as much obliged to private judgments for your Converts as Protestants can be.*

Well but now, he tells us, the Doctor takes the Catholick's part, and though faintly, yet speaks well in so clear a cause (Preservative, Fol. 9.) *The intention of these Disputes, is only to lead you to the Infallible Church, and set you upon a Rock; and then it is very natural to renounce your own Judgment, when you have an Infallible Guide.* But now for convincing Reasons against this plain Truth, as he calls it, the first is as he repeats it thus; *They cannot with any sence Dispute with us, about the particular Articles of Faith, because the sence given of Scripture and Fathers takes its Authority from the Church understanding it so.* This he is pleased to say, is false; *the sence takes its Authority from God who spake that Word.* But how if that sence be not there? Yes, *the Spirit of God is to abide with her (i. e. the Church of Rome) for ever, John the 14. 16. and so she cannot err.* I wonder how our Adversaries can so palpably wrest such Texts, especially

ally considering that they have so often been told of it by our Divines. But to return, the Doctor having said, *That if we should admit of the former Plea, that then first, it puts an end to all the particular Disputes of Religion between us and the Church of Rome; we may Dispute on about an Infallible Judge, but they cannot with any sence Dispute with us about the particular Articles of Faith, such as Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Worship of Images, and the like; for these are to be learnt only from the Church, and cannot be proved by Scripture or Fathers, without the Authority of the Church.* But you see how he pares the words, and to show you that this charge is true, I shall only mention something upon the first Point, viz. Transubstantiation, out of their own Writers, and though I never read their Books, nor do understand any other Language than my own, yet I am so sure that they are honestly quoted, that I challenge any Romanist to prove the Contrary. *Petrus de Alliaco* the Cardinal saith, (4. V. 6. Art. 2. f.) *That manner which supposeth the substance of Bread to remain still is possible, neither is it contrary to reason, or to the Authority of Scripture; nay it is easier to conceive, and more reasonable than that which says the Substance doth leave the Accidents; and of this opinion no inconvenience doth seem to ensue, if it could be accorded with the Churches determination.* *Scotus* saith (Script. Oxon. 4. D. 11. q. 3. § quantum ergo ad istum) *Principally this seemeth to move us to hold Transubstantiation, because concerning the Sacraments we are to hold as the Church of Rome doth. And (4. d. 14. q. 3. Bill. Euchar L. 3. C. 23. there is no Scripture to convince it, unless ye bring the Church of Romes exposition.* *Tonstal* saith (de verit. Corp. & Sang. p. 46.) *That it was free for all men, till the Councel of Lateran, to follow their own conjectures as concerning the manner of the Presence.*

This

6 *A Defence of Dr. S's. Preservative*

This shows upon what account Popery is believed, and with what respect they treat Scripture, making it indeed what they have call'd it, *A Nose of Wax*, that so it might be flexible to cover their Errors. Now if the sence they contend for cannot be proved from those Texts which they bring for it, nor is contained in Scripture, but that another sence may be had without any inconveniency; that is more easie to conceive and more reasonable, but that the Church of *Rome* hath determined otherwise: Surely we may conclude that the Scripture takes it's Authority from the Church, understanding it so, seeing they believe it wholly upon that account, and would believe otherwise were it not for that Reason.

Preservative, &c. fol. 11. Ask them whether the belief of an Infallible Judge must be resolved into every mans private Judgment? whether it be not necessary to believe this with a Divine Faith; and whether there can be a Divine Faith without an Infallible Judge? (Answerer page 4.) There can be no Divine Faith without a Divine Revelation, true; and therefore if you will have one with a Divine Faith, believe that there is an Infallible Visible Judge, nay, that the Pope is he, pray shew me a Divine Revelation for it.

Answerer, p. 5.) No understanding Protestant can be disputed into Popery, which owns an Infallible Church, &c. But the Doctors words are, No understanding Protestant can be disputed into this kind of Popery, i. e. That the Church is Infallible, and that the Church of Rome is that Infallible Church, and then gives his Reasons; first, no arguments can give me an infallible certainty of the Infallibility of the Church. (f. the 17.) Now what saith the Answerer, why hear him, We saw Dr. Sherlock just now plead-

pleading for the Jews against St. Paul, now he Reasons even against Christ our God blessed for evermore (just a like indeed Sir) his words prove that Christ who own'd himself Infallible did imprudently so Preach or work Miracles----- Arguments so offensive to pious ears (mentioned 2 Tim. 4. 3.) ought to meet with no other Answer than Prayers for him who offers them. And doth this indeed follow from the Doctors words? is the comparison all one between your Reasons and Arguments, for your Churches Infallibility, and those which Christ offered with the addition of Miracles? And yet though he was Infallible, and did work Miracles to confirm his Doctrine, he did not command them to be content with an Implicit Faith, but the contrary, Search the Scriptures, John 5. and 39. and Mark 12. and the 24. tells them, They erred not knowing the Scriptures. Besides, Sirs, could there not be a true certainty without Infallibility? doth Dr. Sherlock say, That the Jews could not be Disputed into Faith, unless that Faith were Infallible? no, he leaves that to be talked of by you who are the great pretenders to it.

*Ibid. It is impossible by Reason to prove that Men must not use their own Reason and Judgment in matters of Religion. Answerer, That Men must use Reason to come to the Knowledge that God hath revealed what they believe is very certain ---- But after that there is no further use of Reason, if we believe St. Paul, but in order to the bringing into Captivity all understanding into the obedience of Christ, 1 of Corinth. the 10. his meaning is, that he will allow you to use your Reason, so long as it leads you to the Church of Rome, but if once you find any thing to contradict that, you must immediately renounce it, and not expect Sense and Reason from an Infallible Church which is above all that ; but methinks if my
Sense*

8 *A Defence of Dr. Ss. Preservative*

Sence and Reason will serve me to find out an Infallible Church, it is a little severe to renounce it when I come there. We do not find in Scripture that they did or were required to do thus, nay the contrary, and yet sure the Apostles were as Infallible as the Church can pretend to be now, 1 Epistle of *John* 4. 1. *Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God.* 1 *Corinth* 10. 15. *I speak as to wise Men, judge ye what I say;* and *Acts* 17. 11. *We have this particular commendation of the Bereans, that they were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether what they heard were conformable thereto or no.*

Preservative, &c. Fol. 21.) We have as much assurance of every Article of our Faith, as you have of the Infallibility of your Church; first, because we are in general assured that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Answerer, Hitherto there holds some parity, though but lame, but suppose it were entire, the Conclusion would be this, Catholicks are as certain of the sence of Scripture as Protestants are that they have the Letter. But don't you forget, Sir, that Infallibility is the Point Disputed, you say indeed you have it, but ye are Judges in your own Cause, none own it but your selves; but the Scripture all Christians own to be the Word of God, yea and we have the concurrent Testimonies of all Churches that we have those Canonical Books, and have we no better ground for our Belief in that Point than you have for the other, seeing you contradict and Dispute against all man-kind, and are fain to take it upon your own word, with the wresting of a Text or two to speak for the Church of Rome, which is to have

have no other Limitation than to the Church Universal; but if your Church be not Infallible (which you know we say) what warrant can you have for the receiving of particular points of Faith, wholly because she teacheth them? Here if you are not found in the first point, all the rest will tumble. But now Protestants have all the certainty imaginable for the Rule of their Faith, and for the particular points of it; because they prove them from the Word of God, which is their Rule. But let us suppose a while that your Church were Infallible, what greater Certainty (for that is the point you know which the Doctor was upon) have you of it, than we have of any particular point of Faith? As for the Certainty of Reason and Argument, that we have, and would fain see you shew more; what we believe is according to Scripture, and doth not contradict either Sense or Reason, nor any other Principle of Knowledge; which you know the People of your Church are not to stand upon; but to submit to her teaching, let her teach how she will, because she is supposed to be Infallible, though they have no greater Certainty of it than Protestants have for any single point; which makes it ridiculous indeed, for any man to forsake the Church of *England* for the Church of *Rome*, upon the account of greater Certainty.

Preservative, *Ibid.* Secondly, and in particular, we are assured that the Faith which we profess is agreeable to Scripture. Thus far the Answerer: but the Doctor added, or expressly contained in it, and does not contradict either Sense or Reason, nor any other Principle of Knowledge. Now what saith the Answerer? why, If he means that they have the same Proof for this, which Catholics have for the Infallibility of the Church, that is, for the Being of that

10 *A Defence of Dr. S's Preservative*

*Church which declares her self Infallible (for a Church erring in such a point, would cease to be the Church of Christ) then 'tis evidently false, since each Christian in this Age hath the same Evidence of her being the Church of Christ, and of her teaching Truth, and consequently of her Infallibility, which he hath of Christ, viz. Prophecies, Miracles, &c. which no Protestant so much as challengeth for the certainty of the particular Sense of Scripture; the same proofs which Catholics have for the Infallibility of the Church, that is, for the Being of the Church: This is a pretty conceit, the Infallibility of the Church, that is to say, the Being of the Church; Can't a Church Be then without being Infallible? Well! but every Christian in this Age hath the same Evidence of the Church of Rome's being the Church of Christ, and of her teaching Truth, and consequently of her Infallibility, which he hath of Christ, viz. Prophecies, Miracles, &c. And where I pray are these things? What! the Evidence so plain to all Christians, and yet two parts of three that can see no such thing? I confess, we have heard much of Miracles, but could never see any; if they have any, they are kept to themselves: but 'tis no matter, for (as a late Author hath it) the greatest Miracle is, that any man can believe them: I shall not repeat any; they are common enough; any one that hath a mind to a whole Book full, need but enquire for the *School of the Eucharist*, and I believe he will have satisfaction.*

Preservative, Ch. fol 23.) If you must not use your Reason and private Judgment, then you must not by any Reasons be perswaded to condemn the use of Reason. This is a plain case; for as the Doctor adds, to condemn is an act of Judgment: But the Answerer saith, All this might with equal weight be said by a sick Man, who dissuaded from

from choosing his own Remedies, and desired to send for a skilful Doctor, should answer, 'tis impossible by Reason to persuade me not to use my Reason, in governing my self by Reason, as my own Reason teacheth me; which would be to condemn Reason, and yet be guided by your Reason; such Discourse would prove the Sick Man, at least somewhat Light-headed. What 'tis a Symptom of in Dr. Sherlock, his Modesty will not let him be positive in. But Sir, Is this same Sick Man, when he is desired to send for some able Doctor, perswaded too to renounce his Reason, or rather, is it not that he should submit his Judgment (not renounce his Reason) in that case, to that person whom he hath all the reason in the World to believe, hath better knowledge and understanding of those things which are to be us'd for his Recovery than himself? And all this while, methinks he is govern'd by Reason, though he doth not think fit to trust his own Skill; 'tis the Doctors profession to know what Medicines are fit to be used in such and such Cases and Constitutions, which I never trouble my self about, and therefore surely I may be govern'd by him without renouncing my Reason; nay, 'tis Reason that makes me do it. But this bears no comparison; Religion is, or ought to be the concern of all: Physical Speculations, those only who are pleased to make it their Study; every one must believe for himself, but every one is not obliged to be his own Doctor.

Preservative, &c. fol. 25.) *We must allow of no Reason against the Authority of plain and express Scripture --- We may reasonably conclude, that God understands the reasons and nature of things better then we. This the Answerer saith, is a very true and Catholick Principle. Whence we may infer, That when the Doctor comes to apply*

12 *A Defence of Dr. S's Preservative*

it, that he will be guilty of some most Illogical Inference. Alas for Dr. *Sherlock*! who can hold no Catholick Principle, but what must have some Illogical Inference attending it to spoil all; but let's hear it: *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, is such a plain and express Scripture, that no Reason can justify the Worship of another Being.* And what saith the Answerer to this, sure some great matter, since he prepared his Reader before-hand with a *Behold? Why 'tis like this, A Subject must love his King, and owe Allegiance to him alone; therefore no Reason can justify the love of a Child for his Father, or of a Wife for her Husband.* What a delicate piece of Sophistry is here! But 'tis no matter, his design is to confound us unlearned Hereticks: but Sirs, the command is, to *serve God only*; which Service, we must of necessity understand to be that which is Divine; but Worship is so: wherefore it irresistibly follows, that we must not Worship any other Being, but what we are here commanded to serve, which is, *God alone*: So your similitude will not hold. I am to love my King, (and I thank God I do it heartily) and to owe all Allegiance to him, but I may love another to whom I owe no Allegiance; but to Worship a Being, I can't without serving that Being; wherefore the Text is plain against the Worship of any other but God.

Preservative, &c. Fol. 26. and in the Answer, page 6.
The sense of the Law is the Law ----- but when the Law is not capable of a different sense, or there is no such Reason as makes one sense absurd, and the other necessary, the Law must be expounded according to the most plain and obvious sense of the words. Answerer. *This Principle is sound.* You may then be sure of a false Inference at the heel of it, just as before. Surely this Gentleman is one
of

of *Momus's* Race, whom nothing could please. They write of him, That none of the Gods could do any thing but he had a quarrel at it ; when *Neptune* had made a Bull, *Vulcan* a Man, and *Minerva* a House, he quarrell'd at the Bull because the Horns stood on his Head ; the Man, because he had not a Window in his Breast ; the House because it stood not upon Wheels, to remove it when it stood not well ; and when *Venus* walked by, smiling at his conceit, he told her, she was not well made neither ; and her Shoes made too much creaking as she went. But for the Doctors false Inference ; and this is it, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any Image*, &c. which is so express a Law against Image-Worship, that no Reason must be admitted for it ; and what hath he to say to this ? Why, there are two questions which he thinks cannot be answer'd, but that the Doctors false Inference will appear : First then, *What if you be told, that although the Jews had perhaps a command of making no graven Image, &c. yet this being a positive Law, and not confirmed in the Gospel, doth not oblige us ? Will this reason be admitted ? No ; and yet you have no other motive to pass by as express a Law of Sanctifying Saturday ?* And do you indeed Sir, think it all one ? Is it not held on all hands, that the keeping of the Seventh day was Figurative, and so abolish'd at the Death of Christ ? but so far as it was Moral, namely, that a Seventh day should be kept, that still remains. Besides, were we, or Christ and his Apostles, Authors of this change ? Christ as he rose on that day, so he did usually appear on that day to his Disciples : And doth not the Scripture maintain the Celebration of it by the constant practice of the Apostles, *Acts* 20. & 7. *1 Corinthians* 16. & 21. which shews, that we have better foundation for our belief in this point, than you who rely on Tradition. Well !
but

14 *A Defence of Dr. S's. Preservative*

*but suppose it be rejoyn'd, that only the making to themselves (by private Authority) an Idol to adore it with Divine Worship is forbidden, can none of these Reasons be heard? no; then Bezeleel by Gods command, making several likenesses of things on Earth, Solomon placing such in the Temple, sinned against the first Commandment ----- The truth is, what sense they put on any Text, is the express Law, against which, no Reason must be heard; so they challenge to themselves the Infallibility which they so sturdily deny to the Church of God. For Answer to this then, first, we do not challenge the Infallibility which the polluted and degenerate Church of Rome (which he calls the Church of God) claims: for she would have us take the sense of any Scripture upon her own word; and because she so teacheth, we must submit to her definitions; and for this reason, because she hath defined them: 'Tis not for private Christians to examine particular points of their Faith or Religion; no, 'tis sufficient to submit to an Infallible Guide; and that too, if he declare as the Council of Constance did, Session 13. concerning the Eucharist, *That notwithstanding our Lord did institute it in both kinds, and the Apostles so celebrated it, yet now it should not be so*; which was confirmed by the Council of Trent, Session 21. But for us Protestants, we cannot think that any reason can be sufficient to lay aside an express Text. Well, but how shall we excuse Bezeleel and Solomon from sinning against the first Commandment? why truly that is very easie; for 'tis plain, that they did not make them for any Religious Worship, neither did they pay any Adoration to them. And what comparison this hath to the practice of the Church of Rome at this day, I shall leave to any man who hath any knowledge of their Religion, to judge.*

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And now (in good time) he tells us he will conclude the Doctor's admirable Principles and Inferences (i. e. *that make void all right use of common Sense and Reason*) with one so singular, that it deserves to be observed by all: And truly it doth so, but it is of his own coining; take it in his own Words, page 6. *No Argument from the necessity of a thing must be admitted to prove it is; if there be no Infallible Judge, there can be no certainty of Faith. — Tho it be true, and you think it to be true, you must not allow this consequence, therefore there is one. — Such Arguments do not prove that there be such a Judge, but that there ought to be.* Now to see the Disingenuity (to say no worse) of this Author, we must look into the Doctor's Book, and there, (fol. 44.) he tells us, *That we should never admit any Arguments merely from the usefulness, convenience, or supposed necessity of any thing to prove it is.* Now the Answerer leaves out the word *supposed*, and so makes that absolute, which was only conditional, (fol. 45.) *If there be not an Infallible Judge, there can be no certainty in Religion:* This the Doctor said; but for whom, I pray, for himself, or for the Roman Catholick? and therefore he goes on, *If I thought all this were true, (as I believe not a Word of it is) I should only conclude, that it is great pity that there is not an Infallible Judge instituted by Christ: But if you would have me conclude from these premises, Ergo, there is an infallible Judge of Controversies, I must beg your pardon for that; for such Arguments as these do not prove, that there is such a Judge, but only that there ought to be one, and therefore I must conclude no more from them. Indeed this is a very fallacious way of reasoning, because what we may call useful, convenient, necessary, may not be so in itself; and we have reason to believe it is not so, if God have not appointed what we think so useful,*

16 *A Defence of Dr. S's. Preservative*

convenient, and necessary, which is a truer and more modest way of reasoning, than to conclude, that God has appointed such a Judge, when no such thing appears, only because we think it so useful and necessary that he ought to do it : And now I would fain know who it is that denies Wisdom and Reason in God.

And thus I have run through that Point, which the Answerer told us he would enlarge upon, *i. e. Reason*, which to defend Protestancy, we must make void, for so fam'd an Author as *Dr. Sherlock*, could not support it, he saith, *without making void all Reason*, which Charge, how well he hath proved, the Reader is to judge.

To go on then, the Principles of *Dr. Sherlock*, which *make void all Faith*, follow next, which if I can but find, we are to take notice of; and I shall not say any thing to that long Harangue, which the Answerer makes, before he tells us where they be; not that I think it unanswerable, but because it is that which hath been so often answered by our Divines, and what they can say nothing to, but repeat over their old Objections again, that so, if possible, they might keep those Learned Men from better Employment. For the first then, the Answerer tells us it is *fol. 78.* mistaken for *fol. 79. & 80.* where the Doctor puts the case thus : *Suppose the Protestant Faith uncertain, how is the Cause of the Church of Rome ever the better? — Is Thomas an honest Man, because John is a Knave : To this he answers, That if Thomas and John be accused severally of Theft, and the stolen Goods be found with John, I conceive, though this prove not Thomas so assuredly an honest Man, yet an honest Jury would, he conceives, bring him in Not Guilty. That there is a true Faith, and consequently a certain Rule*
of

of Faith all Christians acknowledge, Protestants on one side choose one Rule, (how differently ever they apply it) Catholicks another; I conceive then if the Protestant Rule be proved uncertain, 'tis plain the Catholicks Rule must be the certain one. But for Answer to this conceit, which I confess made me smile at the Reading, and to begin with John and Thomas for the first, The stolen Goods are found with him, and so he's Condemn'd; but now for the proof that Thomas is an honest Man, and I see no necessity that he should be so, unless there was nothing for him to steal but what John had got; nay, unless it be also proved that he had no hand in the taking of those Goods which were found with John, which he might have, and so be equally guilty with him, notwithstanding their being found with another. And so for Protestants and Roman Catholicks, one choose one Rule and the other another; and suppose the Protestants Rule be proved false, doth it indeed necessarily follow that the Catholicks must be the true? I conceive, Sir, that you must first prove that it is impossible for people to make to themselves two wrong Rules, which I presume will be labour. Suppose I should tell you that there were two Men which were to go to such a City or Town, but could not agree in their Judgments concerning the nearest way which lead to it, and so took too several ways, and conclude, when one of them had been prov'd to err, that the way which the other took must be the nearest way, which was to go to that City or Town, and so the true and right way: would you not Answer me, that that did not follow, for there might be a third, and so a nearer than either of the former, and that they might both err; wherefore if you could prove the Protestant Rule uncertain, I do not see how it appears so plain, as you would persuade me, that your Catholick one is the right.

18 *A Defence of Dr. S's Preservative*

What can be the Gentlemans meaning in his next affected Paragraph, I cannot conceive, unless it be this, *That because Protestants take the Reasons of their Faith from Scripture, and not from the Church of Rome, that therefore they can have no certain or Divine Faith, which if it be, I pity him; if it be not, I must desire him to explain himself.*

Preservative, &c. ibid.) We believe the Apostles Creed, and whatever is contained in the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, and this is all we believe: And, I hope, they will not say that these things are uncertain. Answer, page 7. They are in themselves very certain, but not to any Protestant, whose Rule of Faith cannot make him certain of any one Article: this is pleasant, these things are certain, but the Scripture, which is our Rule, cannot make us certain of any one Article contain'd in it; which shews demonstratively upon what account they hold their Religion, and believe the Articles of their Faith, not because they find them in Scripture, for that cannot make them certain that they are there, but because their Church so teacheth, which is the thing he means; that God hath given sufficient means to come to the knowledg of, if we would but use them: Well but the Doctors Answer, justifies Turk, Jew and Gentile, and how, I pray, do they believe all that is contain'd in the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles which we do? and which you cannot deny, but with a little grumbling, because we will not receive it upon the Authority of your Church, with those additions which she is graciously pleas'd to make.

Preservative, &c. fol. 81.) If these things, i. e. the Writings of the Apostles, &c. be not built upon certain Reasons.

sons, their Infallible Church can have no certainty of the Christian Faith. Answer, This is most notoriously false, since she is not Infallible by any light of her own, but by the guidance of the Spirit of Truth. Were not the Apostles certain of what Christ told them, when they had acknowledg'd him the Son of God, before he gave them certain Reasons for it, 'tis a blind Impiety even to think so. Patience good Sir, and only be pleas'd to tell me whether therein were a certain Faith without certain Reason or no? as for what the Doctor said it is undoubtedly true, for as he saith but just before, *Infallibility cannot make that certain, which is in it self uncertain: an infallible Man must know things as they are, or else he is mistaken, and ceases to be Infallible; and therefore what is certain, he infallibly knows to be certain, and what is uncertain, he infallibly knows to be uncertain: for the most certain and infallible knowledge does not change its Object, but sees it just as it is.* Wherefore supposing your Church had the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, to make her Infallible in all things, she must certainly see things as they are: wherefore the Scripture must be the Word of God, and what is therein contain'd certain, because she so Teacheth, or else she ceaseth to be Infallible.

Preservative, &c. fol. 82.) *'Tis their common Argument, That there is a great variety of Opinions among Protestants, and that they condemn one another with equal confidence and assurance. But the Answerer saith, he should have added, Though they use the same Rule of Faith, and apply it by the same means, and that thus propos'd 'tis an unanswerable argument against our Rule of Faith, and evidently proves it uncertain.* Alas for us now, we are gone with a witness, our Rule being prov'd uncertain, we must certainly err if we rely upon it: yet chear up, we

20 *A Defence of Dr. S's Preservative*

have heard this unanswerable Argument Answer'd, particularly by the Reverend Dr. *Stillingfleet*, in his Answer to *J. S's* Catholick Letters; but 'tis a Talent inherent in a Romanist, to repeat his old musty Arguments without taking notice of what hath been said in Answer thereto. But I must beg leave a while to look into the forenamed Book, and there I find a full Answer to what is here said; *J. S.* having said, *That Scripture interpreted by private Judgment was not the way to know certainly what Christ and his Apostles taught, because they that made use of it that way did not agree, but differ'd in fundamentals,* (In his first Letter). The Doctor Answers, Fol. 39. *Thus it doth not follow, by no means, that the Scripture is no certain Rule;* and he puts it thus, according to *J. S's* Propositions, First, *Arithmetick prescribes a certain way by Addition and Subtraction for us to find out any Sum.* Secondly, *Therefore it must be such, that they who take it shall arrive by it at the exact Sum.* Thirdly, *But two Men who have made use of the same way, differ at least a Hundred in casting up the Sum.* Fourthly, *Therefore Arithmetick doth not prescribe a certain way to attain at a certain Sum.* Fifthly, *Therefore they who take only that way, cannot by it arrive at the certain Sum.* But, saith he, Fol. 40. *those who consider a little better than Mr. S. hath done, will distinguish between the Rule and the Application of it; the Rule of Arithmetick may be nevertheless certain, although those who want skill or care and diligence, may mistake in casting up a particular accompt. The same we say here, Scripture is a certain Rule in all Fundamental Points, to such as have capacity, and use due care and diligence in finding them; but we do not deny but Men through prejudice, weakness, want of Attention, Authority of false Teachers, impatience of thoroughly examining things, and not using proper helps, may run into gross Errors ——— But still*

still the Rule is certain to those who use it aright. Fol. 41. For although the Scripture be an infallible Rule, yet unless every Man that makes use of it be infallible, he may mistake in the application of it. I desire the Gentleman to take this into Consideration, and if he think it not sufficient, to try his skill upon Dr. Stillingfleet.

Preservative, &c. Fol. 83.) Were all Protestants of a mind, would their Consent and Agreement prove the certainty of the Protestant Faith? The Answerer saith, Not at all, yet that it is a most ridiculous Inference of Dr. Sherlock, that this is the same Rule, and their Disagreement proves their Uncertainty; all Union is no Argument of the Spirit of God; for People may combine to do ill; yet St. Paul assures us Disunion and Desertion is a certain Mark of the absence of the Spirit of God: You should have added, in some, not in all the disagreeing Parties: For suppose, Sir, the Question be put among a Company of Men to go rob such a House, or kill such a Man; some of them consent to it, but there are others which will not; I desire to know, whether it be a mark of the absence of the Spirit of God in those which do not agree to do that Wickedness? And so you see what the Doctor's most ridiculous Inference comes to, and how he hath made void all Faith.

But now for Dr. Sherlock's Position, which makes void all Scripture-proof, as it lies in the Answer, page the 7th. If a Mystery appear against Sense and Reason, we must have a Scripture-proof as cannot possibly signify any thing else, or else it will not answer that Evidence which we have against it, Sense and Reason proving it naturally impossible. A Text, he saith, which cannot possibly have another Sense, doth not leave it in any ones Liberty, who owns Scripture, to be.

22 *A Defence of Dr. S's. Preservative*

be an Heretick; therefore the Church produced no such Text against the Arians or Nestorians; whence it evidently follows, that according to Dr. Sherlock, the Arians and Nestorians were bound not to believe the Trinity, and the Incarnation of Christ. A Happy Ministerial Guide! And well led those who follow him! And now, Reader, I must desire you again to look into the Doctor's Book; and read what he saith, and there I find that 'tis but reasonable that the Evidence for it (i. e. Transubstantiation) should at least be equal to the Evidence against it, fol. 70. And therefore we must demand a self-evident Proof for this, because it is self-evident that Transubstantiation contradicts Sense and Reason, fol. 71. And so he saith, fol. 72. That we must demand such a Scripture-proof of Transubstantiation, as cannot possibly signify any thing else, [without contradicting Sense and Reason, as that doth] or else it will not answer the Evidence which we have against Transubstantiation; for Sense and Reason pronounce Transubstantiation to be naturally impossible; and therefore, unless it be as impossible to put any other Sense upon Scripture, than what signifies Transubstantiation, as it is to reconcile Transubstantiation to Sense and Reason, there is not such good Evidence for Transubstantiation as against it. With what Conscience now can any Man cavil at this, and say, that it makes void all Scripture-proof? As for the Trinity and Incarnation, which the Arians and Nestorians disputed, they are Mysteries indeed, and might seem to be above Sense and Reason, but they are not contrary to it; and it was not necessary to produce Scripture, which could not possibly signify any thing else, that is to say, which could not possibly have any other Sense put upon them, without contradicting Sense and Reason; for they could not prove that those which were disputed did either. But now for Transubstantiation, that that doth,

doth both, is plain ; wherefore 'tis but reasonable to desire a Scripture-proof that cannot signifie any-thing else but Transubstantiation, without contradicting Sense and Reason, else, as the Doctor saith, *there is not so good Evidence for it as against it* ; so that for ought our Author can say, Dr. *Sherlock* is a good Ministerial Guide, and those may be happy which follow his Guidance ; when those who seek to pervert Souls, and bring them into a By-way of Darkness and Error, may be lamenting abus'd Mercy, and that they made no better use of that Talent which God had lent them.

Next comes the Doctor's Position, *making void all use of Holy Fathers and General Councils*, which to prove, the Answerer repeats by halves what the Doctor said, and then concludes, *That some of those Requisites not being possibly to be known, no use is to be made of any*. What Dr. *Sherlock* said is this : *That 'twas ridiculous for that man that had been taught his Religion out of the Scripture, and which he might find there if he pleas'd, to change it for Quotations out of the Fathers and Councils which he did not understand, because some honest Priest, (a sort of Men who never deceive any one) had told him that such a Father, who liv'd, it may be, they know not where nor when, and wrote they know not what, has spoke in favour of Transubstantiation, or Purgatory, or some other Popish Doctrine*. And then he comes to tell us what Questions we ought to ask, when we are urged with the Authority of Fathers, as, *How we shall know that such Books were written by that Father whose Name it bears ? Whether it be uncorrupted ? How we shall know the true meaning of those Words which they cite from them, which the Words themselves many times will not discover without the Context, and the like, which requisites that Man who will build any thing*

24 *A Defence of Dr. S's Preservative*

any thing upon their Authority, must know, or else he may be miserably mistaken ; yet this is not to deny any use of Fathers and Councils ; for Learned Men may dispute about them as they please ; and I question not, if our Religion were to be try'd by the Fathers, but that we should undoubtedly carry it against the Church of *Rome*, notwithstanding all her Pretences to Antiquity ; and yet we do not build our Faith thereon, but keep to that Rule which they had to walk by, which is the Word of God, contained in the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament.

And now I am arriv'd to the last Point, which our candid Answerer undertook, *viz.* to shew that Dr. *Sherlock* made void all Moral Honesty, and that he tells us lies in his last Chapter, where to insinuate, that a Catholick thinks the Blessed Virgin more powerful in Heaven than Christ, he tells us, that he says ten Ave Marias for one Pater Noster. Well ! for the matter of Fact, that the Catholick doth say Ten Prayers to the Virgin for one to Christ, the Answerer can't deny : Ay, but he doth not think her more powerful than Christ. Suppose that ; yet sure he must think her more merciful, and readier to hear his Prayers than Christ, or else why is he so partial to pray Ten for one ? which I doubt will prove much of a consequence with the former : And yet if the Doctor had not only done what he here perswades us he doth, but directly said it, I know not how he would have excused some of his own Party : And you know, Sirs, what the Author of the *Remarks upon the Reflections of the Author of Popery Misrepresented and Represented* hath undertaken, *viz.* this among many other things, to shew, when you shall desire it, that there are some of your own Writers, who believe the *Bles-*
sed

*sed Virgin to have as much Power in Heaven as her Son, and that maintains the praying to her to command him, and begging from her pardon of Sins, and the assurance of Salvation. To conclude, the Answerer tells us, that to be thorough-Sherlock, and thorough-Protestant-Minister, he concludes with the most disingenuous Misrepresentation, and the most false Calumny imaginable, as a supposed and owned Truth, to wit, That Catholicks worship the visible Species in the Eucharist: A most impudent Slander, he saith, no Catholick being guilty of it, no more than the Apostles of worshiping and adoring the Cloaths of Christ, when they ador'd him upon Earth. Preservative, fol. 89. He (Papist Represented) believes it unlawful to commit Idolatry, and most damnable to worship any Bread-en God, which, saith Dr. Sherlock, is spoke like a Protestant, but yet he pays Divine Adoration to the Sacrament, which is done like a Papist. Here you see is no mention made of Species, but the word is Sacrament; and that they do pay Divine Adoration to that, they can't deny; but then they tell us, That Christ is there, yea, that that Body which was born of the Virgin Mary, and that hung upon the Cross, Flesh, Bloud, Bones and all is whole in every Point and Crum of the Consecrated Wafer; and that there remains nothing of the consecrated Elements; and that 'tis this their Adoration is paid to. But surely now they had need to have good Grounds that this is so; this had need to be wonderfully clear in Scripture; and yet when they come to prove it thereby, they bring those Words, *This is my Body*, and conclude there is Foundation enough for all this, and much more, as if there were no Figurative Expressions in Scripture; and as if there were a necessity to take Scripture in a Sense which contradicts Sense and Reason, when another Sense more natural and easie may be had.*

26 *A Defence of Dr. S's Preservative*

And now to close up all with some good Advice for us Protestants, and that too in Dr. Sherlock's Words, only putting the Word *Scripture* in lieu of *Fathers*, (a little Alteration, do not stand upon't ; come, come, shew a little good nature for once, and take it upon my Word) *Amongst Christians there is not one in a hundred thousand who understands all Scripture, and it is morally impossible they should, and therefore certainly there must be an easier and shorter way to understand Christian Religion than this, or else the generality of Mankind, even of profess'd Christians, are out of possibility of Salvation: Think well on it, as you will answer at God's Tribunal for the Care you took of the one only Necessary, the saving of your Souls ; seek out that easier and shorter way, and walk faithfully in it. Good, ee'n close your Eyes, and examin nothing, but come over to our Mother Rome, and be resolute, and I'll warrant an happy Agreement. If this is not to be thorough Papist, and thorough Romish Priest, I know not what is : But to consider it a little, though the truth is, it doth doth not deserve it, all Scripture, yes, all Scripture must be understood, or else the Christian Religion cannot : So that if a Man understood all the Texts of the Old and New Testament, except one, as for Instance, that in the 9th of the Revelations, verse the 14th. he cannot understand Christian Religion, and is out of a possibility of Salvation. This is a wonderful Discovery, and yet one would not think that it came out of a Jesuits Forge ; 'tis wrote so bunglingly, 'tis not done with Art enough to deceive, and so will not answer the Makers purpose : For as for us Protestants, I hope we are above such little Shams ; and we do not only say, but we find that Scripture in all Points necessary to Salvation is plain and easie ; so that we may run and read : 'Tis true, there are some Texts, which we that are*

are unlearned, cannot readily find the true Sense and meaning of; but they are not such as immediately concern Salvation; and we are not destitute of Helps as to these; for we have learned and Religious Divines, whom we have all the reason imaginable to believe have no other Design upon us, than the *Good of Souls*, to whom we may have recourse; and we always find them willing and ready to afford us their Assistance: So that to conclude, we are very happy where we are, and in a fair way to understand Scripture, tho it may be not every jot and tittle of it. However, I think it much better to know some, and so much as is sufficient for my Salvation, than to go over to a Church which would have me stupify'd, and to understand none at all.

F I N I S.

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PAge 27. line 10. for *great*, r. *greater*. p. 37. l. 5. f. *when*, r. *where*. l. 23. f. *contract*, r. *contact*. p. 40. l. 27. f. *should it*, r. *it should*. p. 79. l. 22. f. *undermined*, r. *undetermined*. p. 80. l. 3. f. *corrupt*, r. *corrupt*. l. 22. f. *up*, r. *upon*. p. 91. l. 22. r. *in knowledge and holiness*.

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C H A P. IV.

Some Directions relating to particular Controversies.

THose who would understand the particular Disputes between us and the Church of *Rome*, must of necessity read such Books as give the true State of the Controversie between us, and fairly represent the Arguments on both sides ; and where such Books are to be met with, he may learn from a late Letter, Entituled, *The Present State of the Controversie between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, Or an Account of Books written on both sides.* But my present Design is of another nature, to give some plain and easie Marks and Characters of true Gospel Doctrines ; whereby a man, who has any relish of the true Spirit of Christianity, may as certainly know Truth from Error in many cases, as the Palate can distinguish Tasts. There are some things so proper to the Gospel, and so primarily intended in it, that they may fitly serve for distinguishing marks of true Evangelical Doctrine : I shall name some of the chief, and Examine some Popish Doctrines by them.

SECTION

SECTION I.
Concerning IDOLATRY.

1. **O**NE principal intention of the Gospel, was more perfectly to extirpate all Idolatry; *For this purpose the son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil*, that is, not only all Sin and Wickedness, but the very Kingdom of Darkness; that Kingdom the Devil had erected in the world, the very Foundation of which was laid in Idolatrous Worship.

To this purpose Christ has expressly taught us, that there is but one God, and has more perfectly instructed us in the nature of
 1. Joh. 18. God: *For no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten son, who is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him.* Ignorance was the Mother of Pagan Idolatry, because they did not know the true God, they Worshipped any thing, every thing, for a God; and therefore the most effectual course to cure Idolatry, was to make known the true God to the world: for those men are inexcusable who know the true God, and Worship any thing else. Tho' indeed according to some mens Divinity, the knowledge of the true God cures Idolatry, not by rooting out Idolatrous Worship, but by excusing it; by making that to be no Idolatry in a Christian, who knows God, which was Idolatry in a Heathen, who did not know him: for if (as some say) none can be guilty of Idolatry, who acknowledge one Supream Being; then the Heathens, when once they were instructed in the knowledge of the one true God, might have Worshipped all their Country Gods, which they did before, without being guilty of Idolatry; which is, as if I should say, that man is a Rebel, who through mistake and ignorance owns any man for his Prince, who is not his Prince; but he, is no Rebel, who knows his lawful Prince, and pays Homage to another, whom he knows not to be his Prince.

And therefore our Saviour confines all Religious Worship to
 Mat. 10. God alone: *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve:* It is his Answer to the Devil, when he tempt-
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ed him to fall down and worship him, but he gives such an answer as excludes all Creatures, not only bad but good Spirits, from any share in Religious Worship: Our Saviour does not deny to worship him merely because he was the Devil; (tho' that a man may do without the guilt of Idolatry, who knows him to be the Devil, if those men are in the right, who allow nothing to be Idolatry, but to worship some Being for the Supreme God, who is not Supreme; for then you may worship the Devil without the guilt of Idolatry, if you do not believe him to be the Supreme God) but our Saviour's reason for not worshipping him was, because we must Worship none but God. Which is as good a reason against the worship of the most glorious Angel, as of the Devil himself: Nay, our Saviour denies to worship him, though the Devil made no terms with him, about the kind or degrees of Worship: He does not require him to offer Sacrifice to him, (which is the only Act of Worship the Church of *Rome* appropriates to the Supreme God) but only to bow down before him, as an expression of Religious Devotion; he did not demand that degree of Worship, which the Church of *Rome* calls *Latria*, and appropriates to the Supreme God: nay, he confesses that he was not the Supreme God, for he does not pretend to dispose of the Kingdoms of the World in his own right, but says, they were given to him, and he had power to give them to whom he pleased; in which he acknowledges, that he had a Superiour, and therefore could not in the same breath desire to be owned and worshipped as the Supreme. But our Saviour denies to give him this inferiour degree of Worship, and thereby teaches us, that no degree of Religious Worship must be given to any Being, but the Supreme God.

And because Mankind were very apt to worship inferiour Demons, as believing them to have the care of this lower World, and that it was in their power to do great good to them, to answer their Prayers, and to mediate for them with the Superiour Deities, or with the Supreme God, if they believed one Supreme, which appears to be a received Notion among them: to prevent this kind of Idolatry, God advances his own Son to be the universal

versal Mediator, and the Supreme and Sovereign Lord of the World; that all Mankind should make their Addresses and Applications to him, and offer up their Prayers only in his Name; that in him they should find acceptance, and in no other name. Which was the most effectual way to put an end to the Worship of all inferiour Deities, and Creature-Patrons and Advocates; for when we are assured, that no other Being can Mediate for us with effect and power, but only Christ, it is natural to Worship no other Mediator but him, who being the eternal Son of God, may be worshipped without danger of Idolatry. Thus *St. Paul* tells us, That tho' the Heathen world had *Gods many and Lords many*, yet to us there is but *one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ*: One Supreme and Sovereign Deity, and one Mediator between God and men.

1 Cor. 8.
5, 6.

Now this being so apparently one end of Christ's coming into the World to Suppress the Idolatry of Creature-Worship, and to confine all Religious worship to one Supreme Being, in opposition to the many Gods of the Heathens, and to teach us to make our Applications to this one God by one Mediator, in opposition to the worship of inferiour Deities; can any man imagine, that the worship of Saints and Angels; and the Virgin *Mary*, can be any part of the Christian Religion? For how dear soever they are to God, they are but his Creatures, and if Sovereign Princes will not receive their greatest Favourites into their Throne, much less will God.

If God under the Gospel dispensation has taken care to prevent the Worship of inferiour Beings, by appointing his own Son to be our only Mediator and Advocate, can we imagine, that he ever intended we should offer up our Prayers to other Mediators? If he had liked the Mediation of Creatures; would he have given his own Son to be our Priest and our Mediator? Whatever fair pretences may be made for this, it apparently contradicts the Gospel dispensation; for if we must own but one God, he alone must be worshipped; if we have but one Mediator, we must offer up our Prayers only in his Name and Intercession. The Religious Worship of Creatures is Idolatry, and if God intended to
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root Idolatry out of the World, by the Gospel of Christ, he could never intend to set up the Worship of Saints, and the Virgin Mary, which tho' it have not all the aggravations of Pagan Idolatry, yet is Creature-worship.

Thus we know, how fond the Heathens were of material Images and Pictures, to represent their Gods as visibly present with them; and to receive Religious Worship in their stead: not that they did believe their Gods to be Corporeal, or that their Corporeal Images were proper Likenesses of their Gods, in which a late Author places the whole of Idolatry, which I confess was agreeable enough to his design, to find out such a Notion of Idolatry, as it may be no Persons in the World were ever guilty of, and then he might excuse, whom he pleased from Idolatry: But the Heathens were not such great Sots, as this account makes them, as the Learned *Founder of all Anti-Catholick, and Anti-christian Principles* (as this Author is pleased to stile a very great man, whose Name will be Venerable to future Ages) has abundantly proved. But they wanted some material Representations of their Gods, in which they might as it were see them present, and offer up their Petitions to them, and court them with some visible and sensible Honours. Now to cure this Idolatry, tho' God would not allow any Images or Pictures for Worship, yet by the Law of *Moses* he appoints them to build an House or Temple for himself, where he would dwell among them, and place the Symbols of his Presence; there was the Mercy-seat, and the Cherubims covering the Mercy-seat, and there God promised *Moses* to meet with him, and to commune with him from between the two Cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony. Now this was a Symbolical Representation of God's Throne in Heaven, where he is surrounded with Angels, as we know, the Holy of Holies itself was a Figure of Heaven; and therefore the Jews, when they were absent from the Temple, prayed towards it, and in the Temple (as is thought) towards the Mercy-seat, as the place of God's peculiar Residence; as now when we pray, we lift up our eyes and hands to Heaven, where God dwells: So that under the Law God had a peculiar place for Worship, and peculi-

Dr. Stillin.
Defence of
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25 Exod.
22.

Reasons for
abrogating
the Test, p.
124. &c.

ar Symbols of his Presence, but no Images to represent his Person, or to be the Objects of Worship: I know some *Roman* Doctors would fain prove the Cherubims to have been the Objects of Worship, and which is more wonderful, a late Bishop of the Church of *England* has taken some pains to prove the same, and thereby to justify the Worship of Images in the Church of *Rome*; and before I proceed, I shall briefly Examine what he has said in this Cause.

One would a little wonder, who reads the Second Commandment, which so severely forbids the Worship of Images, that God himself should set up Images in his own Temple as the Objects of Worship; and a modest man would have been a little cautious, how he had imputed such a thing to God, which is so direct a contradiction to his own Laws. That the Cherubims were *Statues or Images, whatever their particular Form was*, I agree with our Author, and that is the only thing I agree with him in: For,

1. That *they were Sacred Images set up by God himself, in the place of his own Worship*, I deny. For the Holy of Holies, where the Ark was placed, and the Mercy-seat over the Ark, and the Cherubims at the two ends spreading their Wings, and covering the Mercy-seat, was not the place of Worship, but the place of God's Presence. The place of Worship is the place wherein men worship God; now it is sufficiently known, that none of the *Jews* were permitted to go into the Holy of Holies, nor so much as to look into it, and therefore it could not be the place of their Worship: the Holy of Holies was the Figure of Heaven, and therefore could be no more the place of Worship to the *Jews*, than Heaven now is to us, while we dwell on Earth. The High Priest indeed entered into the Holy of Holies once a year, with the Blood of the Sacrifice, which was a Type of Christ's entering into Heaven with his own Blood, and yet the Priest went thither not to Worship, but to make an Atonement; which I take to be two very different things; however if you will call this Worship, it has no relation to any Worship on Earth, but to what is done by Christ in Heaven, of whom the High Priest was a Type. And this,

9 Heb. 11,
12.

this, I think, is a demonstration, that the placing of Cherubims to cover the Mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies, does not prove the lawful use of Images in Temples or Churches, or in the Worship of God on Earth; if it proves any thing, it must prove the Worship of God by Images in Heaven, of which the Holy of Holies was a Figure; and if any man can be so foolish as to imagine that, let them make what they please of it, so they do but excuse us from worshipping God by Images on Earth.

2. That these Cherubims were *the most solemn and sacred part of the Jewish Religion*; that *nothing is more remarkable in all the old Testament, than the honour done to the Cherubims*, that an outward worship was given to these Images, as Symbols of the Divine presence, that the High Priest adored these Cherubims once a year, as this Author asserts, I utterly deny; and he has not given us one word to prove it.

For the Cherubims were so far from being the most solemn and sacred part of the Jewish Religion, that they were no part at all of it, if by Religion he means Worship; for there was no regard at all had to the Cherubims in the Jewish Worship; and it is so far from being *remarkable in the Old Testament*, that there is not the least footstep or intimation of any honour at all done to the Cherubims: There is nothing in Scripture concerning them, but the command to make them, and place them at the two ends of the Mercy-Seat; and that God is said to dwell between the Cherubims, and to give forth his Oracles and Responses from that place: but I desire to learn, where the Jews are commanded to direct their Worship to or towards the Cherubims? where the High Priest is commanded to adore the Cherubims once a year? or what Protestant grants he did so, as this Author insinuates?

He supposes the Cherubims to have been *the Symbols of Gods presence*, and his *representations*, and that the Jews directed their P. 130. worship to them as such, *and that is to worship God by Images, or to give the same Signs of Reverence to his Representations, as to himself*: but how does it appear, that the Cherubims were the Symbols of Gods presence? God indeed is said to sit between the Cherubims, and he promised *Moses* to commune with him from

between the Cherubims, but the Cherubims were no Symbols of Gods presence, much less a representation of him: if any thing was the Symbolical presence of God, it was the Mercy Seat, which was a kind of Figurative Throne, or Chair of State; but the Cherubims were only Symbolical representations of those Angels, who attend and encompass Gods Throne in Heaven, and were no more representations of God, or Symbols of his presence, then some great Ministers of State are of the King; as this Author himself acknowledges, when he makes *the four beasts* in the Revelations (*Rev. 4. 6, 7.*) which stood round about the Throne, to be an allusion to the representation of the immediate Divine Presence in the Ark by the Cherubims; if he had said to the Cherubims covering the Mercy Seat, which was his Figurative Throne; and where he was invisibly present; without any visible Figures or Symbols of his presence, he had said right: for the Cherubims which covered the Mercy Seat, were no more Symbols of Gods Presence, than the four Beasts, which stood before the Throne, are the presence of God; or then some great Courtiers or Ministers of State, who attend the King, are the presence of the King; They attend the King, wherever he is, and so may be some sign of his presence, but are not a symbolical presence, as a Chair of State is. But it seems our Author imagined, that the Cherubims were such Symbols of Gods presence, and such representations of him, as Images were of the Pagan Gods, and therefore might be worshipped with the same signs of reverence, as God himself was; according to *Thomas Aquinas's* Rule, that the Image must be worshipped with the same Worship, which is due to the Proto-type, or that Being whose Image it is, which is such old Popery, as *Monfieur De Meaux*, and the Representers cry shame of; well, But how does he prove, that any Worship was directed to these Cherubims? I can find no proof he offers for it, but *David's Exhortation* (as he calls it) to the People, to honour the Ark (he should have said worship) *remember, join down so, we worship his Footstool, for it, or he, is holy.* Now suppose this did relate to the Ark, What is that to the Cherubims? When but four Pages before, he tells us, that *the Ark is called God's Footstool, and the*

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Cherubims his Throne; How then does *David's* Exhortation to worship the Ark, which is God's Footstool, prove that all their Worship, must be directed to the Cherubims, which are his Throne? It is pitty, that great Wits have but short Memories.

And yet I fancy, our Author would have been much troubled to prove the Ark to be meant by God's Footstool; for the Ark was in the Holy of Holies, which was a figure of Heaven; and neither the Heaven, nor any thing in it, but the Earth, is in Scripture called God's Foot-stool; and the Psalmist expressly applies it to *Zion*, and to the *Holy Hill*, which, I will not prove, was not the Ark. 99 Psalm
2, 9.

And this I suppose is a sufficient confutation of his Exposition of the words, *To bow down to, or worship his foot-stool*; for I believe he did not think that Mount *Zion*, or the Holy Hill, was the object of worship, or the symbol of God's presence; but there God was present, and that was reason enough to worship at his foot-stool, and at his holy hill; as our *English* Translation reads it.

But now suppose the *Jews* were to direct their Worship towards the Mercy-seat, which was covered with the Cherubims, where God had promised to be present; how are the Cherubims concerned in this Worship? The worship was paid only to God, though directed to God, as peculiarly present at that place; which is no more, than to lift up our Eyes and Hands to Heaven, where the Throne of God is, when we pray to him: I grant, that *bowing to*, and *bowing towards* anything, as the Object of Worship, is the very same, as this Author observes; and therefore had the *Jews* either bowed *to* or *towards* the Cherubims, as the Objects of their Worship, as the Papists bow *to* or *towards* their Images, they had been equally guilty of Idolatry, and the breach of the second Commandment; but when bowing *To* signifies bowing to an object of Worship, and bowing *towards* signifies bowing to this Object of Worship, only *towards* such a place, where he is peculiarly present, this makes a great difference; and this was all the *Jews* did at most, if they did that; they bowed to God towards the Mercy-seat, where he dwelt, without any regard to the Cherubims or Mercy-seat, as the Object of Worship,

ship, which was as invisible to the *Jews* then, as the Throne of God and the Angels in Heaven are now to us; and we may as well say, that those who lift up their eyes and their hands to Heaven, when they pray to God, worship the Angels, who incircle his Throne, because they know that the Angels are there; as say, that the *Jews* worshipped their invisible Cherubims, because they knew that the Cherubims were there: For is there any necessity that the *Jews* must worship whatever they knew, was in the Holy of Holies, because they worshipped God towards that place, any more than there is, that we must worship whatever we know to be in Heaven, when we direct our Worship to God in Heaven?

Men, I grant, may worship an unseen Object, for so we all worship God, whom we do not and cannot see; but it is a good argument still, that the Cherubims were not intended by God for the Objects of Worship, because they were concealed from the Peoples sight; for I believe the World never heard before of worshipping invisible Images: The original intention of Images, is to have a visible Object of Worship; for an invisible Image can affect us no more than an invisible God; and if our Author had consulted all the Patrons of Image-worship, whether Pagan or Popish, he would have found most of the reasons they alledge for this Worship to depend on sight, and therefore whatever he thought, are all lost when a man shuts his eyes. A man who directs his worship to an Image, may be an Idolater in the dark, and with his eyes shut; but as blind as Idolaters are, there never had been any Image-worship, had their Images been as invisible as their Gods; and therefore sight has more to do in this matter, than our Author was aware of.

But it seems the High-Priest once a Year did see these Cherubims, and adore and worship them. But this is another mistake: for the *Jews* did believe, that the High-Priest never saw the Cherubims or Mercy-seat, even when he went once a Year into the Holy of Holies; and they have great reason for what they say, since God expressly commanded, That when he went into the Holy of Holies, he should take *a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of*
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sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat, that is upon the testimony, that he die not, 16. Levit. 12, 13. which shews that the Cherubims and Mercy-seat were to be covered with a Cloud of Incense, and to become as invisible to the High-Priest within the Veil, as to the People without it.

But suppose the High-Priest did see the Cherubims, when he entred within the Veil, I have one plain Argument to prove that he did not worship them, not only because no act of Worship was commanded him when he went into the Holy Place, but because as the Holy of Holies was the figure of Heaven, and the Cherubims the types of Angels, who stand about the Throne of God; so the High-Priest entring into the Holy of Holies, was the type of Christ ascending into Heaven with his own Bloud; and therefore the High-Priest must do nothing in the Holy of Holies, but what was a proper figure and type of what Christ does in Heaven: and then he must no more worship the Cherubims, which covered the Mercy-seat, or the Typical Throne of God, than Christ himself, when he ascended to Heaven, was to worship the Angels, who stand about the Throne.

So that notwithstanding God's command to make two Cherubims, and to place them at the two ends of the Mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies, all Image-Worship was strictly forbid by the Law of *Moses*; and God has provided the most effectual remedy against it by the Incarnation of his Son: Mankind have been always fond of some visible Deity, and because God cannot be seen, they have gratified their Superstition by making some visible Images and Representations of an invisible God: now to take them off from mean corporeal Images and Representations, which are both a dishonour to the Divine Nature, and debase the minds of men, God has given us a visible Image of Himself, has cloathed his own eternal Son with Humane Nature, who is *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, 1. Hebr. 3.* And therefore *St. John* tells us, *That the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glo-*

ry as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, 1 John 14. And for this reason when Philip was desirous to see the Father, *Shew us the Father and it sufficeth*; Christ tells him, that the Father is to be seen only in the Son, who is his visible Image and Glory; *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not seen me Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?* 14 John 8, 9. This was one end of Christ's Incarnation, that we might have a visible Deity, a God Incarnate to represent the Father to us, who is the living and visible Image of God; and there could not be a more effectual way to make men despise all dead material Representations of God, than to have God visibly represented to us in our own Nature.

It is true, Christ is not visible to us now on earth, but he is visible in Heaven, and we know, he is the only visible Image of God, and that is enough to teach us, that we must make and adore no other. He is as visible to us in Heaven, as the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies was to the Jews, and is that true propitiatory of which the mercy seat was a Type and Figure, 3 Rom 25. *Alm bath God set forth to be a propitiation through Faith in his blood in ashen* the Mercy-seat, as that word is used, 9 Heb 5. He is the natural Image of God, and his Mercy-seat, or Presence and Throne of Grace, he is his visible Image, tho' he cannot be seen by us, for the Typical Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies, did prefigure, that his residence should be in Heaven, and therefore invisible to us on earth, but there we may see him by Faith, and there he will receive our Prayers, and present them to his Father.

Now then to sum up this Argument: since it was one main design of Christs appearance, to root all the remains of Idolatrous Worship out of the world, is it credible, that the Worship of Saints and Angels, and the Virgin Mary; the worship of Images and Reliques, as it is practised in the Church of Rome, should be any part of Christian Worship, or allowed by the Gospel of our Saviour? If Creature-worship, and Image-worship were so offensive to God, here is the Worship of Creatures, and Images still, and therefore all the visible Idolatry, that ever was practised

in the world before: All that they can pretend is, that they have better Notions of the Worship of Saints, and Angels, and Images, than the Heathens had: but whether they have or no, will be hard to prove: The Pagan Philosophers made the same Apologies for their Worship of Angels, and Dæmons, and Images, which the Learned Papists now make, and whether unlearned Papists have not as gross Notions about their Worship of Saints and Images, as the unlearned Heathens had, is very doubtful, and has been very much suspected by learned Romanists themselves: But suppose there were some difference upon this account, can we think, that Christ, who came to root out all Idolatrous Worship, intended to set up a new kind of Creature-Worship and Image-Worship in greater pomp and glory than ever, and only to rectifie mens Opinions about it? Suppose the Idolatry of Creature-Worship and Image-Worship, does consist onely in mens gross Notions about it; yet we see under the Law to prevent and cure this, God did not go about to rectifie their Opinions of these things, but absolutely forbid the Worship of all Images, and of any other Being but himself, which methinks he would not have done, had there been such great advantages in the Worship of Saints, and Angels, and Images, as the Romanists pretend: and when God in the Law of *Moses* forbid all Creature and Image-Worship, can we think, that Christ who came to make a more perfect Reformation, should only change their Country Gods into Saints and Angels, and the Virgin *Mary*, and give new names to their Statues and Images? Which whatever he had taught about it, instead of curing Idolatry, had been to set up that same kind of Worship, which the Law of *Moses* absolutely forbid, and condemned as Idolatry.

When God to cure the Idolatrous Worship of inferiour Dæmons, as their Mediators and Advocates with the Supreme God, sent his own Son into the World to be our Mediator, can we think, that he intended after this, that we should worship Angels, and Saints, and the Virgin *Mary*, as our Mediators? When God has given us a visible Image of himself, his Eternal and Incarnate Son, whom we may Worship and Adore, did he still intend, that

we should worship material and sensible Images of Wood or Stone? By the Incarnation of his own Son, God did indeed take care to rectifie mens mistakes about Creature-Worship, and to cut off all pretences for it: Those who pleaded that vast distance between God and men, and how unfit it was, that Sinners should make their immediate approaches to the Supreme God, and therefore worshipped inferiour Dæmons as middle Beings between God and man, have now no pretence for this, since God has appointed his own Son to be our Mediator: Those who worshipped Images as the visible Representations of an invisible God, have now a visible Object of Worship, a God Incarnate, a God in the nature and likeness of a Man; and though we do not now see him, yet we have the notion of a visible God and Mediator to whom we can direct our Prayers in Heaven, which is satisfaction enough even to men of more gross and material Imaginations, without any artificial and senseless Representations of the Deity: And was all this done, that men might worship Creatures and Images without Idolatry? or rather was it not done to cure mens inclinations to commit Idolatry with Creatures and Images? Whoever believes that the Gospel of our Saviour was intended as a Remedy against Idolatry, can never be perswaded, that it allows the Worship of Saints and Images; which if it be not Idolatry, is so exactly like it in all external appearance, that the allowance of it does not look like a proper cure for Idolatry.

SECT. II.

Concerning the great Love of GOD to Mankind, and the Assurances of Pardon and Forgiveness which the Gospel gives to all Penitent Sinners; which are much weakned by some Popish Doctrines.

2. **T**He Gospel of Christ was intended to give the highest demonstration of God's Love to Mankind, and the greatest possible Security to all humble penitent Sinners, of the Forgiveness of their Sins: Hence the Gospel is called the *Grace of God*, and the *Gospel of Grace*, as being a Dispensation of Love and Goodness; and therefore whatever lessens and disparages the Gospel-

Part II. *A Preservative against P O P E R Y.*

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spel-Grace, can be no Gospel-Doctrine. As to consider this particularly.

The Gospel magnifies the Grace of God in giving his own Son for us: *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,* 3 John 16. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,* 1 John 4. 9, 10. And St. Paul assures us, that this is such a glorious manifestation of God's love, as will not suffer us to doubt of any other expressions of his Goodness: *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* 8 Rom. 32. So that the Gospel of our Saviour gives us much higher demonstrations of God's love and goodness, than either the Light of Nature, or the Law of Moses did. Love is the prevailing Attribute of God under the Gospel-dispensation, *For God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John 4. 16.

Thus the Gospel of Christ gives a humble Penitent as great assurance of Pardon, as his own guilty Fears can desire; for Repentance and Remission of Sins is preached in the Name of Christ: He has expiated our Sins by the Sacrifice of his Death, *God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, much more then being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life,* 5 Rom. 8, 9, 10. For as he was delivered for our Offences, so he was raised again for our Justification; And him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. So that ^{1 John 2.} *if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ* ^{1, 2.} *the righteous, who is able to save all them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them,* 7 Heb. 25. These are the fundamental Doctrines of Christianity, and therefore nothing can be a Gospel-Doctrine, which

weakens or overthrows them. Let us then examine the Popish Doctrine of Purgatory, and the Invocation of Saints and Angels as our Mediators with God, and see how they are reconcileable with the Gospel-notion of God's love, and that security it gives us of Pardon through the Merits and Intercession of Christ.

1. Let us consider the Doctrine of Purgatory, which is but the outward Court or Region of Hell, where the Punishments are as severe as in Hell itself, only of a less continuance; and yet as short, as they are, they may last many hundred, nay thousand Years, unless their Friends and the Priests be more merciful to them, or they themselves have taken care before Death to pay the Price of their Redemption. This is a barbarous Doctrine, and so inconsistent with that mighty Love of God to penitent Sinners, as it is represented in the Gospel of Christ, that it is not reconcileable with any notion of Love and Goodness at all; you may call it Justice, you may call it Vengeance, if you please, but Love it is not, or if it be, it is such a Love as no man can distinguish from Hatred: for my part I declare, I do not desire to be thus loved; I should rather chuse to fall into nothing, when I die, than to endure a thousand Years torments to be happy for ever; for Humane Nature cannot bear the Thoughts of that: And is this, that wonderful Love of God to Sinners, which is so magnified in the Gospel, to torment those, who are Redeemed by the Blood of Christ, some hundred or thousand Years in the Fire of Purgatory, which is not cooler than the Fire of Hell?

The Light of Nature, I confess, never taught this, for Mankind never had any Notion of such an outrageous Love; they always thought, that the Love of God consisted in doing good, not in damning those, whom he loves, for so many Ages: And if this be all the Discovery, the Gospel has made of the Love of God, we have no great reason to glory in it. He who can believe, that God, who so loved the World, as to give his only begotten Son for the Redemption of Sinners, will torment a penitent Sinner so many Years in Purgatory, till he has either endured the punishment of his Sins himself, or is released by the Charity of his Friends, or the Masses of some Mercenary Priests, deserves to lie
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in Purgatory, till he thinks more honourably of the divine goodness, and be convinced, that it is no such extravagant commendation of the love of God, to send penitent Sinners to Purgatory.

There are two extravagant Notions whereon the Doctrine of Purgatory is founded, which overthrow all the natural Notions men have of Goodness, and destroy all the hope and confidence of the most penitent Sinners in the goodness of God. As,

1. That God may forgive Sins, and yet punish us for them; for no man can go into Purgatory according to the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, whose Sins are not already forgiven: but though his Sins are forgiven, he must make satisfaction for that temporal punishment, which is due to them, either in this World; or in Purgatory: Now how reconcilable these two are, to forgive, and to punish, let all mankind judge. I believe, very few men think, they are forgiven, when they are punished; for that which all men desire should be forgiven them, is the punishment, they have deserv'd. What is it, men are afraid of, when they have sinned? is it not, that they shall be punished for it? What is it men desire, when they desire Pardon? is it not, that they may not be punished? And is it any comfort to a Malefactor to be pardoned, and to be hanged? Does any man boast of his love and kindness, or take any comfort in it, who freely forgives him, but exacts the payment of the Debt, or the punishment of his fault? And if this be so contrary to the very notion of goodness and forgiveness among men, how comes it to be the notion of goodness and forgiveness in God? How comes that to be love and goodness, which the Sinner receives no benefit by? for love and goodness, I think, signifies to do good; or if this be goodness, let those take comfort in it that can.

If it be said, that it is an Act of goodness to exchange the eternal punishment of Hell, which is due to sin, into the Temporal punishment of Purgatory, I grant, this is something, but only ask, whether it would not have been a more perfect expression of love and goodness, to have remitted the Temporal Punishment also of, it may be, some thousand years Torment in Purgatory?

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whether this might not have been expected under a dispensation of the most perfect love? and from that God, who sent his only begotten Son into the World to save Sinners? Whether those sins are perfectly forgiven, which shall be avenged, tho' not with Eternal, yet with long Temporal Punishments in the next World? Whether any man thinks himself perfectly forgiven, who is punished very severely, tho' not absolutely according to his deserts? And consequently, whether the Doctrine of Purgatory be not a very great diminution of the Love of God, and the Grace of the Gospel? And whether that can be a true Gospel Doctrine, which represents the Love of God, much less than the Love of a kind and good man, who when he forgives the Injury, forgives the whole Punishment of it? Nay, Whether that can be a Gospel Doctrine, which represents the Love of God less than infinite? and I suppose an infinite Love may forgive true Penitents the whole Punishment of their Sins; and then there is no need of Purgatory.

ally. In Purgatory, God does not only punish those, whom he has pardoned, but he punishes for no other reason, but punishment-sake. For thus the *Roman* Doctors tell us, that the Souls in Purgatory, are in a state of Pardon, and in a state of Perfect Grace; and they suffer the pains of Purgatory, not to purge away any remains of Sin, or to purify and refine them, and make them more fit for Heaven, but only to bear the punishment due to Sin, for which they had made no satisfaction, while they lived. Now I dare boldly affirm, this is irreconcilable with any degree of Love and Goodness: to make any Punishment just, it must have respect to the guilt of sin, to make it an act of goodness, it must be intended for the reformation of the sinner; but when sin is pardoned, the guilt at least is taken away, and therefore such punishments can have no relation to guilt; and when the sinner is in a perfect state of Grace, and needs no amendment, such punishments can have no respect to the good and reformation of the sinner, and therefore such punishments are neither just nor good, and this is the exact notion of Purgatory; and methinks we should consider, whether this agrees with that account the Gospel

Gospel gives us of the love and goodness of God: should a Prince have a Jail of the same nature with Purgatory, where for several years he torments those whom he pretends to have pardoned, and who are grown very good men, and good Subjects, and need no correction, or discipline, I believe all the World would laugh at those, who should call this, love and goodness, pardon and mercy. Hell is very reconcileable with the goodness of God, because it is prepared only for those, who are the Objects of a just, a righteous Vengeance, and a very good God may be very just; but Purgatory can never be reconciled with the superabundant goodness of God to sinners, through Jesus Christ, unless men think it a great kindness to suffer the pains of Hell for several Months, Years, or Ages for no reason, which makes it either just or good to suffer them. So that a Popish Purgatory is inconsistent with the belief of God's great Love and Goodness to sinners, in Jesus Christ, and destroys the hope and confidence of sinners: for if they may lie in Purgatory for some thousand years, as they may do, notwithstanding the Love of God, and the Merits of Christ, if the Pope, or the Priests, or their Money be not more merciful unto them, they have no great reason to glory much in the Goodness of God, though they should go to Heaven at last: so that our Protestant need not dispute much about Purgatory: let him only ask a Popish Priest, How the Doctrine of Purgatory can be reconciled with that stupendious Love of God declared to penitent sinners, in his Son Jesus Christ? for it is a contradiction to the Notion of Goodness among men, to inflict such terrible punishments in meer Grace and Love, even when the sin is pardoned, and the sinner reconciled, and no longer in a state of Discipline and Tryal.

Secondly, The Doctrine of Purgatory destroys, or weakens, that Security the Gospel hath given Sinners of their Redemption from the Wrath of God, and the just punishment of their Sins. One great Security, is the Love of God declared to the World by our Lord Jesus Christ, but if the Love of God to penitent Sinners, who are Redeemed by the Blood of Christ, be consistent with his tormenting them in Purgatory so many thousand years, as you have

have already heard, it will be a very hard thing to distinguish such Love from Wrath, and a Sinner, who is afraid of so many thousand years punishment, can take no great comfort in it : but besides this, the Doctrine of Purgatory destroys mens hope and confidence in the Merits and Intercession of Christ, and in the expresse promises of Pardon and Remission of Sins in his Name.

1. It destroys mens hopes in the Merits of Christ, and the atonement and expiation of his Blood ; For if the Blood of Christ does not deliver us from the punishment of Sin, what security is this to a Sinner ? Yes, you'll say, Christ has Redeemed us from Eternal, tho' not from Temporal Punishments, and therefore penitent Sinners have this security by the expiation of Christ's Death, that they shall not be eternally Damned : This I know the Church of *Rome* teaches ; but I desire to know ; How any man can be satisfied from Scripture, that Christ by his Death has delivered us from Eternal Punishments, if he have not delivered us from Temporal Punishments of Sin in the next World ? I thankfully acknowledge, and it is the only hope I have, that the Gospel has given us abundant assurance of the expiation and atonement made for Sin by the Blood of Christ ; but what I say is this, that if these Texts which prove our Redemption by the Death of Christ ; do not prove, that Christ has redeemed us from the whole punishment due to Sin in the next World, they prove nothing, and then we have not one place of Scripture to prove, that Christ by his Death has redeemed us from Eternal Punishments ; which is enough to make all Christians abhor the Doctrine of Purgatory, if it destroy the Doctrine of Salvation by Jesus Christ. As to show this briefly :

The hope and security of Sinners depends upon such Scripture expressions as these : that Christ has *died for our sins*, that he has made *atonement* for sin, that he is a *propitiation through faith in his blood*, that he has *redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us* : that *remission and forgiveness of sins is preached in his name* ; that *by him we are justified from all those things, from which we could not be justified by the Law of Moses*, that *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ* ;
that

that *we are reconciled unto God, and saved from wrath by him.* Now I desire to know, Whether all these expressions signifie, that for Christ's sake, and through the atonement and expiation of his Blood, a penitent Sinner shall be delivered from the punishment due to his sins? If they do not signifie this, how is a Sinner secured, that though his sins are pardoned, and he is justified, and reconciled to God, and redeemed from the Curse of the Law, and saved from Wrath, he shall not after all this be damned for his sins, since that is the punishment of sin, which it seems is not removed, when the sin is pardoned, and the Sinner justified and reconciled to God? If these expressions do not signifie taking away the punishment of sin, I desire one Text of Scripture to prove, that a Sinner, who is pardoned and justified, shall not undergo the Eternal Punishment of his sins. If to be pardoned and justified, &c. does signifie to be delivered from the punishment of sin, I desire to know, How a sinner, who is pardoned and justified, can be punished for his sins? that is, How a sinner, who is released from the Punishment of his sins, should be bound to suffer the punishment of his sins in Purgatory?

Our *Roman* Adversaries do indeed distinguish between the Temporal and Eternal Punishment of Sin; the Eternal Punishment of Sin, they say, Christ has made satisfaction for, and that is removed by his Death, that no penitent Sinner shall be Eternally damned; but a Sinner must make satisfaction for the Temporal punishment of Sin himself, either in this World, or in Purgatory: and consequently that forgiveness of Sins, signifies the remission of the Eternal Punishment of sin, but not of the Temporal: now I shall not put them to prove this distinction from Scripture, which is a very unreasonable Task, because there is nothing in Scripture about it; but yet I would gladly be secured, that I shall be saved from Eternal Punishments; and therefore I would gladly know, how forgiveness of Sins, and our Redemption from the Curse of the Law, signifies our deliverance from Eternal Punishments, if they do not signifie our deliverance from the Punishment of our sins? And how they can signifie our deliverance from the punishment of our sins, if notwithstanding this we must suffer the punishment

nishment of our sins in Purgatory ? If they signifie, that we shall not be punished for our sins, then indeed they may signifie, that we shall not be Eternally Punished ; but they cannot signifie, that we shall not be Eternally punished, unless they signifie that we shall not be punished, and therefore not in Purgatory neither ; if that be the Punishment of sin. The truth is, this is a very senseless distinction between the Temporal and Eternal Punishment of sin : for I desire to know, Whether the Temporal Punishment be not the Punishment of sin ? be not the Curse of the Law ? if it be, then forgiveness of sin, if it remits the Punishment, remits the Temporal Punishment, for that is the Punishment of sin ; then our Redemption from the Curse of the Law, redeems us from Purgatory, for that is the Curse of the Law too, if you add, and from Death, for that is the Curse of the Law too, and yet those who are redeemed and justified, die still ; which shows the fallacy of this Argument, for it seems Redemption from the Curse of the Law, does not signifie our Redemption from the whole Curse, for then a justified Person must not die, since bare dying is part of the Curse. I answer, this had certainly been true, had not the necessity of dying been expressly excepted out of this Redemption ; for *in Adam all die*, and *it is appointed* (by a Divine Decree) *for all men once to die*, and could they show, where Purgatory is excepted too, then I would grant, that those who are redeemed from the Curse of the Law might fall into Purgatory, if that be any comfort to them : and yet the case is vastly different between Death and Purgatory : for though Death be the Curse of the Law, yet we may be delivered from Death as a Curse and Punishment, without being delivered from the necessity of dying : and thus good men are redeemed from Death : for their Sins are expiated and pardoned, and then the Sting of Death is gone ; for *the sting of death is sin*, and therefore when our Sins are pardoned, Death cannot sting us, can do us no hurt ; because it does not deliver us over to Punishment, but transplants us into a more happy State. The fears of Death are conquered by the promises of Immortal Life, and Death itself shall at the last day be swallowed up in Victory, when our dead Bo-

dies.

dies shall be raised immortal and glorious, so that tho' good men still die, yet they are redeemed from the Curse of the Law, from Death itself as a Curse and a Punishment. But the Popish Purgatory is a place of Punishment, and nothing but Punishment; and therefore is not reconcileable with the remission and forgiveness of sin.

Again I ask, Whether there are two kinds of Punishments due to sin, Temporal and Eternal, of such a distinct nature and consideration, that the Promise of forgiveness does not include both? Nay, that God cannot forgive both; that only the Eternal Punishment can be forgiven, but the Temporal Punishment must be satisfied for, or endured by the Sinner: if this were the case indeed, then I would grant, the Promise of forgiveness could extend only to Eternal Punishments, because God can forgive no other; and the forgiveness of Eternal Punishment, does not include the forgiveness of the Temporal Punishment. But if the Curse of the Law be Eternal Death, and all other Punishments, which can properly be called the punishment of sin (for Correction and Discipline is not the Wrath of God, and the Curse of the Law) are only parts of the Curse, and a partial execution of it; if the only thing, that makes Sinners obnoxious to Temporal Punishments is, that they are under the Sentence of Eternal Death, which God may execute by what degrees he pleases; then to forgive Eternal Punishment must include the forgiveness of Temporal Punishments, as parts or branches of it. As suppose there were a Law, that no man should suffer any Bodily Punishments, but such a Malefactor as is condemned to die, but when the Sentence of Death is past upon him, it should be at the Prince's pleasure to defer the Execution of this Sentence, as long as he pleased, and in the mean time to inflict all other Punishments on him, whatever he pleased; in this Case to Pardon the Sentence of Death, would deliver such a man from all other Punishments too, which by the Law are due only to that man, who is under the Sentence of Death: and in such a Constitution for any man to say, that the Prince's Pardon extends only to Life, but does not excuse from Whipping and Pilloring, and per-

petual Imprisonment, would be to make the Pardon void, since no man by the Law can suffer those other Punishments but he who is Condemned to Die, and therefore he who is pardoned the Sentence of Death, in consequence of that is pardoned all other Punishments too.

Thus it is here, the original Curse against sin was, *in the day, that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, which by the Gospel of Christ is expounded of Eternal Death, and there is no other threatning in all the Gospel against sin, but Eternal Death; and therefore all other Punishments are inflicted by Vertue of this Law, and consequently he who is delivered from this Curse of the Law, from Eternal Punishments, is delivered from the whole Punishment due to sin; unless they can find some other Law in the Gospel, besides that which threatens Eternal Death, which obliges a Sinner to Punishment.

Again, since they acknowledge, that Christ by his Death has delivered us from Eternal Punishments, I do not think it worth the while to Dispute with them, whether those Sufferings and Calamities, which good men are exposed to in this World, may properly be called Punishments, or only Correction and Discipline; but I desire to know, Why they call Purgatory, which is a place of Punishment in the other World, a Temporal Punishment? for this is an abuse of the Language of Scripture, which makes this World Temporal, and the next World Eternal, as St. Paul expressly tells us; *the things, which are seen, are temporal, but the things, which are not seen, are eternal*, 2 Cor. 4. 18. And therefore Temporal Punishments signifie the Punishments in this World, but the unseen Punishments, as well as the unseen Rewards, of the next World are Eternal: which is a demonstration, that there is no Purgatory, unless it be Eternal, and then it is but another Name for Hell, and therefore the State of the next World is called either Life or Death, eternal life, or eternal death: those *who believe in Christ shall never die*, 11 John 25, 26. Now I desire to know the difference between Living, and Dying, and Perishing in the next World; for bad men do not cease to be, nor loose all sence in the next World, no more than good men; and therefore Life can only

only signifie a state of Happinefs, and Death a state of Misery, which is much worse than not being: now if good men must not perish, must not die, but live, in the next World, they must not go to Purgatory, which is as much perishing, as much dying, as Hell, though not so long; but if they must never die, never perish, they must never suffer the pains of Purgatory, which is a dying and perishing, that is, a state of Torment and Misery, while they continue there.

Let us then see how a Papist, who believes a Purgatory-fire in the next World, wherein he shall be tormented (God knows how long!) for his Sins, can prove that a penitent Sinner shall not be eternally damned: Oh! says he, Christ has died for our Sins, and made attonement for them, and we are pardoned and justified through Faith in his Blood; and what then, may we not still be punished for our Sins? If not, what becomes of Purgatory? If we may, prove, that we shall not be eternally damned for Sin, which is the proper punishment of it: For if to be pardoned and justified, signifie to be delivered from punishment, it signifies our deliverance from the whole punishment of Sin, since the Scripture does not limit it: if they do not signifie our deliverance from punishment, then we may be eternally punished for Sin, though we are pardoned and justified.

But we are *redeemed from the curse of the Law, and saved from wrath*. But if such a man may go to Purgatory, why not to Hell? Or if the Curse of the Law, and the Wrath of God be in Hell, but not in Purgatory, though the torments are equally great, why may not he lie for ever in Purgatory, as well as a thousand Years, with this comfort, that though he be infinitely tormented, yet it is not *the curse of the Law, nor the wrath of God*.

Well, but Christ has promised, That those *who believe in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life*: And that proves that the pains of Purgatory cannot be for ever, for then Christ could not make good his promise of bestowing everlasting Life on them: so I confess one would think, and so I should have thought also, that when Christ promised, that such Believers should not perish, and

and should never die, that he meant, such men should not go to Purgatory in the next World; but if falling into Purgatory be *not perishing, and not dying*, it may be *everlasting life* too, for ought I know, and then the pains of Purgatory may be eternal.

Whoever would not forfeit all the assurance the Gospel has given us, of our Redemption from Hell, and a glorious Immortality, must reject the Popish Doctrine of Purgatory, as a flat contradiction to all the gracious Promises of the Gospel: for Hell, or an eternal Purgatory, is as reconcileable with the Promises of Forgiveness and immortal Life, as the Popish Purgatory is.

2. This Doctrine of Purgatory destroys our hope and confidence in the Mediation and Intercession of Christ, and that for these two plain reasons: 1. As it represents him less merciful and compassionate; And 2. less powerful, than the wants and necessities of Sinners require him to be. For

I. After all that is said in Scripture of his being *so merciful and compassionate as High-Priest*, a Sinner who hears what is told him of Purgatory, could wish him a great deal more compassionate than he is, for it is no great sign of tenderness and compassion to leave his Members in Purgatory-fire, which burns as hot as Hell. Could I believe this of our Saviour, I should have very mean thoughts of his kindness, and not much rely on him for any thing: We should think him far enough from being a merciful and compassionate Prince, who can be contented to torture his Subjects for a year together; and it is a wonderful thing to me, that when a merciful man cannot see a Beast in torment without relieving it, it should be thought consistent with the mercy and compassion of our Saviour, to see us burn in Purgatory for Years and Ages. To be sure this destroys all our hope in him in this World; for why should we think, he will be concerned what we suffer here, who can contentedly let us lie in Purgatory, to which all the calamities and sufferings of this life are meer trifles? O Blessed and Merciful JESU! pardon such Blasphemies as these. For

II. If he be compassionate, he must want Power to help us; and that destroys the hope of Sinners as much as want of Compassion.

passion. It must be want of Will or Power in him, that he does not deliver us from Purgatory as well as Hell: and if he want Power to deliver us from Purgatory, for my part I should more question his Power to deliver from Hell, for that is the harder of the two: if his Blood could not expiate for the Temporal punishment of Sin, which the Merits of some Supererogating Saints, or the Pope's Indulgence, or the Priests Masses can redeem us from, how could it make expiation for Eternal punishment? If his Interest in the Court of Heaven will not do the less, how can it do the great? There is no Doctrine more irreconcilable with the perfect Love and Goodness of God, and the Merits and Intercession of our Saviour, which are the Fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel, which is a Dispensation of Love and Grace, than this of Purgatory, and therefore we may safely conclude, that this is no Gospel-Doctrine.

2. Let us now examine the Doctrine of Invocation of Saints and Angels as our Mediators with God, and see whether it does not disparage the Grace of the Gospel, the Love of God, and of our Mediator and Advocate Jesus Christ, to penitent Sinners. Now a very few words will decide this matter.

1. With respect to God; now can that man believe, that God is so very gracious to Sinners for the sake of Christ, who seeks to so many Advocates and Mediators to intercede for him with God. To imagine that we want any Mediator to God, but only our High-Priest, who mediates in Vertue of his Sacrifice, is a reproach to the Divine Goodness. The Wisdom and Justice of God may require a Sacrifice, and a High-Priest to make Attonement for Sin, but Infinite Goodness needs not any Entreaties, and meer Intercessions to move him. A truly good man, who knows a proper Object of his kindness, needs not to be asked to do good. The use of such Advocates and Mediators among men, is either to recommend an unknown Person to the favour of the Prince, or fairly to represent his cause to him, which has been mis-represented by others, or to procure favour for an undeserving person, or among equal Competitors, to procure some one to be preferred; this is all the use of Intercession among men: for

for a good, and wise, and just Pricence, will do what is wise, and just, and good, not only without Intercessors, but against all Intercessions to the contrary. Now I suppose no man will say, that God wants Mediators and Advocates upon any of these accounts; for he knows every man, understands perfectly his cause, will never be perswaded by any Intercessions to shew kindness to unfit Objects, that is, to impenitent Sinners; and his Goodness is so unconfined, and so extensive to all, that there can never be any competition for his Favour; and therefore to multiply Advocates and Mediators to God, must argue a great distrust of his Mercy and Goodness, which a kind and good Prince would take very ill of us.

God indeed has commanded us to Pray for one another in this World, as he has to pray for our selves; but this is not by way of Interest and Merit, as the Church of *Rome* pretends, the Saints in Heaven pray for us, but by humble Supplications, which is very reconcileable with the goodness of God, to make Prayer a necessary condition of granting Pardon and other Blessings we want: but as the use of Prayer for our selves, is not to move God merely by our importunities to do good to us, for we must pray in Faith, that is, with a humble assurance and confidence that God will hear us, which includes a firm Belief of his readiness to grant, what we pray for; so neither are our Prayers for others to move God by our interest in him, that is, they are not the Intercessions of Favourites, but of humble Supplicants.

There was great reason why God should make Prayer the condition of our receiving, though he wants not our importunities to move him, because there are a great many excellent Virtues exercised in Prayer; such as great sorrow for Sin, great humility of Mind, faith in God's Promises, the acts of Love, and affiance and trust in God, and a constant dependance on his Grace and Providence for all spiritual and temporal Blessings: and there was great reason why he should command us to pray for others, tho' he wants none of our Intercessions for them; because it is a mutual exercise of Charity, of Love to our Brethren, and Forgiveness to our Enemies, and is a mighty obligation to do all other
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acts of kindness; for those who know it to be their Duty to pray for one another, will think themselves bound to do good to one another also: This becomes those, who live and converse together in this World, because it is a great instrument of Virtue, and that is a reason why God should encourage the exercise of it by promising to hear our Prayers for each other.

But as far as mere goodness is concerned, the Gospel represents God as so very good to Sinners, that there is no need of any Intercessor for them: For *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,* 3 John 16. This was an act of goodness antecedent to the Incarnation and Death of Christ, and the highest act of goodness that God could manifest to the World, and therefore secures us of God's love and goodness to Sinners without a Mediator and Advocate; for that love which provided a Mediator for us, was without one, and proves, that it was not for want of goodness, or that he needed entreaties, that he gave his Son to be our mediator. And therefore hence *S. Paul* proves, how ready God is to bestow all good things on us: *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things,* 8 Rom. 32. And our Saviour himself represents the goodness of God, by the tenderness and compassion of an earthly Parent: *If ye then being evil (that is, less good than God is) know how to give good things to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him,* 7 Matth. 11. especially in the Parable of the Prodigal, where our Saviour describes the goodness of God to Sinners, by that passion and joy wherewith the Father received his returning Prodigal; nay, he assures his Disciples, that there was no need of his own Intercession to incline God to be good and kind to them: *At that day ye shall ask in my name, and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came out from God,* 16 John 26, 27. God is so infinitely good, that he needs no Mediators or Intercessors to incline him to all acts of goodness; but as he is the wise and just Governour of the World,

he requires a Sacrifice for Sin, and a High-Priest to make Attonement for it, and to interceed in vertue of the Sacrifice. Such a Mediator Christ is, who alone is both our Sacrifice and our Priest, and therefore our only Mediator; not to incline God to be good, for that he was before, infinitely good, or else he had not given his Son to be our Sacrifice and our High-Priest, but to make Attonement for our Sins, and thereby to reconcile the exercise of God's goodness with his wisdom and justice in Governing the World. Such a Mediator and High-Priest does not lessen the Divine goodness, for the intention of his Mediation is not to make God good and kind, but to make it wise and just in God to do good to Sinners; but all other Mediators in Heaven, whose business it is by Prayers, and Entreaties, and Interest, and Favour to incline God to be good to such particular persons as they interceed for, is a real disparagement to the Divine goodness; as if he would not be good unless he were conquered by Entreaties, and over ruled by the prevailing Intercessions of some great Favourites: and yet such Mediators as these the Saints, and Angels, and Virgin *Mary* are, if they be Mediators at all; and therefore to pray to them as to our Mediators, argues such a diffidence and distrust of God's goodness, as does not become the Gospel of our Saviour; this can be no Gospel Doctrine, because it is irreconcilable with that account the Gospel gives us of the Love of God.

2. Nor is it less injurious to the Love of our Saviour, to flee to the Prayers and Aids of Saints, and Angels, and the Virgin *Mary* her self. I shall not now dispute, what encroachment this is upon the Mediatorship of Christ, to make our Addresses and Applications to other Mediators; but whoever does so, must either think that Christ wants Interest with God, without the joynt Intercession of Saints and Angels, or that he wants Kindness to us, and either will not interceed for us at all, or will not do it unless he be prevailed with by the Intercession of Saints, or the Entreaties or the Commands of his Mother. I suppose they will not pretend, that he wants power to do, what we ask of him, when he himself has assured us, *That whatsoever we ask of the Father in his name, he will give it us;* 15 John 16. 16 John 23, 24. Does our

our Mediatour then need other Mediators to interceed with him for us? What! he who became man for us? who lived a laborious and afflicted life for us? who loved us so, as to give himself for us? who is a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, and touched with a feeling of our infirmities, being in all things tempted like as we are, yet without Sin?

What a change does this make in the whole Gospel? Had not the Church of *Rome* found out some better security for Sinners, in the Mediation of Saints, and Angels, and the Blessed Virgin, what a hopeless State had we been in? For all that the Gospel tells us is, That God in great love and goodness to Sinners, sent his Son to be our Saviour; and that we might have the greater assurance of his pity and compassion for us, he became Man, Flesh of our Flesh, and Bone of our Bone; and not only so, but submitted to all the weaknesses and infirmities of our Natures, to the greatest shame and reproach, to the sharpest pains, and the most infamous Death, that he might the better know, what our temptations and sufferings are in this World, and might be more sensibly affected with our condition in all our sufferings: This one would have thought, should have given the greatest security to Sinners of his readiness to help them, who did and suffered all this for them; and this is the only security which the Gospel of our Saviour gives us. But it seems Christ is not merciful and pitiful enough; his Virgin Mother has softer and tenderer passions, and such an interest in him, or authority over him, in the right of a Mother, as some of them have not without Blasphemy represented it, that she can have any thing of him; and thus they suppose the other Saints to be much more pitiful than Christ is, and to have interest enough to protect their Supplicants, or else it is not imaginable why they should need or desire any other Advocates. Now let any man who understands the Gospel, and finds there how the love of Christ is magnified, not only in dying for us, but in his being a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, that this is the only hope of Sinners, That *if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, who is also a propitiation for our sins*, think the Invocation of Saints, as our Patrons and Advocates, to be a Gospel-Doctrine, if he can. E 2 SECT.

SECT. III.

Concerning the Nature of Christian Worship.

3: **A**Nother manifest design of the Gospel, was to reform the Worship of God, not only by extirpating Idolatry, but by purging it from all Pagan and Jewish Superstitions, and to appoint such a Worship as is more agreeable to the Nature both of God and Man. And whoever will take the pains to compare the Worship of the Church of *Rome*, with that Worship which our Saviour has prescribed in the Gospel, will easily discover how unlike they are. Let us then consider what Christ has reformed in the Worship of God, and what kind of Worship he has prescribed to his Disciples.

I. What he has Reformed in the Worship of God; and that may be comprehended in one word, he has taken away all that was merely External in Religion. By which I do not mean that our Saviour has forbid all External Acts of Worship, or such External Circumstances as are necessary to the decent and orderly performance of Religious Worship, which the nature and reason of things requires under all Dispensations of Religion; but that he has laid aside all such External Rites as either were, or were thought to be in themselves Acts of Religion, and to render such Worshippers very acceptable to God. A great many such Rites there were in the Pagan Religion, and a great many in the Jewish Worship of God's own Institution, and a great many more which the Tradition of the Elders, and the Superstition of the Scribes and Pharisees had introduced.

We know the *Jewish* Worship consisted of External Rites; in their Temple, and Altars, and Sacrifices, and Washings, and Purifications, in New Moons and Sabbaths, and Festival Solemnities, in Consecrated Garments and Vessels for the Service of the Temple, in distinction of Meats, &c. the very External observance of these Rites, were Acts of Religion, and necessary to make their Worship acceptable to God; and the wilful and presumptuous neglect or contempt of them, was punished with Death.

Now

Now our Saviour has abrogated all these *Jewish* Rites, and has Instituted nothing in the room of them, excepting the two Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which are of a very different Nature and Use, as we shall see presently : He did not indeed, while he was on Earth, blame the Observation of the Law of *Moses*, which till that time was in full force, and which he observed himself, but he blamed the External Superstitions of the Pharisees, in washing Cups and Platters, and making broad their Phylacteries, and thinking themselves very righteous persons, for their scrupulous observation even of the Law of *Moses*, in paying Tithe of Mint and Cummin, &c. while they neglected the weightier matters of the Law, judgement, mercy, and faith, 23 Mat. 23. But when our Saviour was Risen from the Dead, and had accomplished all the Types and Shadows of the Law, then the Apostles with greater freedom opposed a Legal and External Righteousness, and though they did for a time indulge the *Jews* in the Observation of the Rites of *Moses*, yet they asserted the Liberty of the Gentile Converts from that Yoke, as we may see in the first Council at *Antioch*, and in St. Paul's Disputes with the *Jews*, in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, and elsewhere. And indeed whoever considers the Nature of the Christian Religion, will easily see, that all those ends, which such External Rites served either in the *Jewish* or *Pagan* Religion, have no place here, and therefore nothing that is merely External can be of any use or value in the Christian Worship. As to show this particularly.

1. There is no expiation or satisfaction for sin under the Gospel, but only the Blood of Christ, and therefore all External Rites are useless to this purpose. Him and him only, *God hath* 3 Rom. 25. *set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* Death was the punishment of sin, and Death is the only expiation of it; and none else has died for our sins but Christ alone, and therefore he only is a propitiation for our sins; and yet we know, how great a part both of the *Pagan* and *Jewish* Religion was taken up in the expiation of sin: all their Sacrifices to be sure were designed for this purpose, and so were their Washings and Purifications in some

some degree, and many other voluntary Severities and Superstitions, this being the principal thing they intended in their Religious Rites, to appease God and make him propitious to them ; since then Christ has made a full and compleat satisfaction and atonement for sin, and there is no expiation or satisfaction required of us, all external Rites for expiation and atonement can have no place in the Christian Worship, without denying the atonement of Christ, and this necessarily strips Christian Religion of a vast number of external Rites practised both by *Jews* and *Heathens*.

2ly, Nor does the Gospel admit of any legal Uncleanesses and Pollutions, distinction between clean and unclean Meats, which occasioned so many Laws and Observances both among *Jews* and *Heathens* ; so many ways of contracting legal Uncleaness, and so many ways to expiate it, and so many Laws about Eating and Drinking, and such Superstition in Washing Hands, and Cups, and Platters, but our Saviour told his Disciples, *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth the man.* For whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught, but those things, which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies, these are the things which defile a man ; but to eat with unwashen hands, defileth not a man. And this also delivers Christian Religion from all those Rites and Observances, which concerned legal cleanness, which were very numerous.

3ly, Nor is there any Symbolical Presence of God under the Gospel, which puts an end to the legal Holiness of Places and Things. God dwelt among the *Jews* in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, where were the Symbols and Figures of his Presence : it was God's House, and therefore a holy place, and every thing that belonged to it had a legal Holiness : for the Holiness of Things and Places under the Law, was derived from their relation to God, and his Presence : this was the only place for their Typical and Ceremonial Worship, whither all the Males of the Children

of

1; Math.
21, 17, 18,
19, 20.

of *Israel* were to resort three times a year, and where alone they were to offer their Sacrifices and Oblations to God : the very place gave Virtue to their Worship and Sacrifices, which were not so acceptable in other places ; nay, which could not be offered in other places without sin, as is evident from *Jeroboam's* sin, in setting up the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel* for places of Worship, and the frequent Complaints of the Prophets against those, who offered Sacrifices in the High Places ; and therefore the Dispute between the *Jews* and *Samaritans* was, which was the place of Worship, whether the Temple at *Jerusalem* or *Samaria* : but Christ tells the Woman of *Samaria*, that there should be no such distinction of places in the Christian Worship : *Woman believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the father. --- But the hour cometh and now is, 4 John 24, when the true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth.* Not as if the Father should not be Worshipped, neither at *Jerusalem* nor *Samaria* ; but that neither the Temple at *Jerusalem* nor *Samaria*, should be the peculiar and appropriate place of Worship ; that God's Presence and Worship should no longer be confined to any one place ; that the Holiness of the place should no longer give any value to the Worship ; but those who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, should be accepted by him, where-ever they worshipped him. Such Spiritual Worship and Worshippers, shall be as acceptable to God at *Samaria* as at *Jerusalem*, and as much in the remotest Corners of the Earth, as at either of them : for God's Presence should no longer be confined to any one place, but he would hear our devout Prayers from all parts of the World, where-ever they were put up to him, and consequently the Holiness of places is lost, which consists only in some peculiar Divine Presence, and with the Holiness of places, the external and legal Holiness of things ceases also : for all other things were Holy only with relation to the Temple, and the Temple Worship. For indeed God's Typical Presence in the Temple, was only a Figure of the Incarnation : Christ's Body was the true Temple where God dwelt : for which reason he calls his Body the Temple, *Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it up.*

in three days : And the Apostle assures us, that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ Bodily, *consubstantial* really and substantially, in opposition to God's Typical Presence in the material Temple : and therefore when Christ was come, who was the true *Emmanuel* or God dwelling among us, and had by his Incarnation accomplish'd the Type and Figure of the Temple, God would no longer have a Typical and Figurative Presence.

I will not quarrel with any man, who shall call the Christian Churches, and the Utensils of it, holy things ; for being employed in the Worship of God, they ought to be separated from common uses, and reason teaches us to have such places and things in some kind of religious Respect, upon the account of their relation, not to God, but to his Worship ; but this is a very different thing, from the Typical Holiness of the Temple and Altar, and other things belonging to the Temple, and there are two plain differences between them, the first with respect to the cause, the second with respect to the effect : the cause of this legal Holiness, was God's peculiar Presence in the Temple, where God chose to dwell as in his own House, which Sanctified the Temple, and all things belonging to it : the effect was that this Holiness of the Place Sanctified the Worship, and gave value and acceptation to it : the first needs no proof, and the second we learn from what our Saviour tells the Scribes and Pharisees. *Wo unto you, ye blind guides, which say, whosoever shall swear by the temple it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor ; ye fools and blind, for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple, that sanctifieth the gold ? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing, but whosoever sweareth by the gift, that lieth upon it, he is guilty : ye fools and blind, for whether is greater, the gift, or the Altar that sanctifieth the gift ?* So that it seems, there was such a Holiness in the Temple and Altar, as conveyed a Holiness and Sanctity to other things, even to the Oblations and Sacrifices, which were offered there. But now whatever Holiness there is in Christian Churches and Oratories, they are sanctified by the worship, that is performed there, not the worship sanctified by them. It is the Assembly of Christians themselves, that is the Church

23 Matth.
16, 17, 18,
19.

Church, the House, the holy and living Temple of God, not the building of Wood or Stone wherein they meet: God and Christ is peculiarly present in the Assemblies of Christians, though not by a Figurative and Symbolical Presence, and thus he is present in the places, when Christians meet; and which are Consecrated and Separated to Religious Uses, and there is a natural Decency in the thing, to shew some peculiar Respects to the places, where we solemnly Worship God; but the presence of God is not peculiar to the place as it was appropriated to the Temple of *Jerusalem*, but it goes along with the Company and the Worship; and therefore the place may be called Holy, not upon account of its immediate relation to God, as God's House, wherein he dwells, but its relation to Christians, and that Holy Worship, which is performed there; and I suppose every one sees the vast difference between these two: and thus all that vast number of Ceremonies, which related to this external and legal Holiness of Places, Vessels, Instruments, Garments, &c. have no place in the Christian Worship, because there is no Typical and Symbolical Presence of God, and consequently no such legal Holiness of places and things, under the Gospel.

4^{ly}, Nor are material and inanimate things made the Receptracles of Divine Graces and Verrues under the Gospel, to convey them to us meerly by Contract and external Applications; like some Amulets or Charms, to wear in our Pockets, or hang about our Necks. There was nothing like this in the *Jewish* Religion, though there was in the *Pagan* Worship, but under the Gospel Christ bestows his holy Spirit on us, as the principle of a new divine Life, and from him alone we must immediately receive all Divine Influences and Vertue, and not seek for these heavenly Powers in senseless things, which can no more receive, nor communicate Divine Graces to us, then they do Wit and Understanding to those who expect Grace from them; For can Grace be lodged in a rotten Bone, or a piece of Wood? or conveyed to our Souls by perspiration in a kiss or touch?

5^{ly}, The Christian Religion admits of no External or Ceremonial Righteousness. *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth*

5 Math.
20

any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and obedience to the commandments of God, and faith which worketh by love : The great design of the Gospel, and of all our Saviour's Sermons, being to make us truly holy, that we may be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption, which is in the world through lust. There is nothing our Lord does more severely condemn, than an External and Pharisaical righteousness, which consisted either in observing the External Rites of the Law of *Moses*, or their own Superstitions received by tradition from their Forefathers, and expressly tells his Disciples, *except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven :* Now this cuts off every thing, which is External in Religion at a blow, because it cuts off all hopes and relyances on an External Righteousness, and I believe men will not be fond of such Superstitions, when they know, they will do them no good.

6ly, And hence it appears, that there can be no place for any thing, that is external, in the Christian Religion, but only for some federal Rites ; such as the two Sacraments of the Gospel are, Baptism and the Lords Supper ; the first of which is our admission into the new Covenant, the second the exercise of Communion with Christ in this Gospel Covenant. And such Rites as these are necessary in all Instituted Religions, which depend upon free and voluntary Covenants : for since Mankind has by sin forfeited their natural right to Gods favour, they can challenge nothing from him now, but by promise and Covenant ; and since such Covenants require a mutual stipulation on both sides, they must be transacted by some visible and sensible Rites, whereby God obliges himself to us, and we to him ; but these being only the signs or seals of a Covenant, are very proper for a Religion, which rejects all External and Ceremonial Righteousness and Worship : for it is not our being in Covenant with God, nor the Sacraments of it, that can avail us, without performing the conditions of the Covenant, and therefore this does not introduce an External Righteousness.

Now

NOW, whoever has such a Notion and Idea of the Christian Worship as this, (and let the Church of *Rome* confute it if she can) will easily see without much Disputing, how unlike the Worship of the Church of *Rome* is to true Christian Worship.

For whoever only considers, the vast number of Rites and Ceremonies in the Church of *Rome*, must conclude it as Ritual and Ceremonial a Religion as *Judaism* itself; the Ceremonies are as many, more obscure, unintelligible, and useless; more severe and intollerable, then the *Jewish* Yoke itself, which St. *Peter* tells the *Jews*, neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear; it is indeed almost all Outside and Pageantry, as unlike the Plainness and Simplicity of the Gospel-Worship, as Show and Ceremony can make it.

It is true, external and visible Worship, must consist of external Actions; and must be performed with such grave and decent circumstances of time and place, and posture and habit, as become the Solemnity of Religious Worship; this Reason and Nature teaches; and this the Church of *England* prudently observes, whose Ceremonies are not Religious Rites, but decent Circumstances of Worship, few in number (as the necessary Circumstances of Action are but few) and Grave and Solemn in their use: but this is not to place Religion in any thing, that is external, but only to pay an external Homage and Worship to God, which differ as Worshipping God in a Decent Habit, differs from the Religion of Consecrated Habits and Vestments; or as praying to God with an audible Voice, differs from placing Religion in Words and Sounds which we do not understand, or as Kneeling at receiving the Sacrament, differs from a Bodily Worship of the Host in bowing the knee.

But though the bare number of external Ceremonies, which are always the Seat of Superstition, be a great corruption of the Christian Worship, yet the number of them is the least fault of the Ceremonies of the Church of *Rome*; as will appear, if we consider a little their nature.

For 1. Most of their external Rites are professedly intended as Expiations and Satisfactions for their Sins. This is the Doctrine

and Practice of the Church of *Rome*, that notwithstanding the satisfaction made by Christ, every Sinner must satisfy for his own Sins, or have the satisfaction of other mens applied to him, out of the Treasury of the Church, by the Pope's Indulgences: this is the meaning of all external Penances in Whippings, Fastings, Pilgrimages, and other superstitious Severities; their Backs, or their Feet, or their Bellies must pay for their Sins, unless they can redeem them out of their Pockets too: now it is plain, that these are such external Superstitions, as can have no place in the Christian Religion, which allows of no other expiation or satisfaction for Sin, but the Blood of Christ.

2ly, Those distinctions between Meats, which the Church of *Rome* calls Fasting, (for a Canonical Fast is not to abstain from Food, but only from such Meats as are forbid on Fasting Days) can be no part of Christian Worship, because the Gospel allows of no distinction between clean and unclean things, and therefore of no distinction of Meats, neither: for *meat commendeth us not to God*, 1 Cor. 8. 8. The Church of *Rome* indeed does not make such a distinction between clean and unclean Beasts, as the Law of *Moses* did, and therefore is the more absurd in forbidding the eating of Flesh, or any thing that comes of Flesh, as Eggs, or Milk, or Cheese, or Butter, on their Fasting Days, which is to impose a new kind of Jewish Yoke upon us, when the reason of it is ceased. For there is no imaginable reason why it should be an Act of Religion merely to abstain from Flesh, if Flesh have no legal uncleanness; and if it had, we must all turn *Carthusians*, and never eat Flesh; for how should it be clean one day, and unclean another, is not easie to understand. I am sure St. Paul makes this part of the Character of the Apostacy of the latter days, that they shall Command to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them, which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer. And let no man judge you in meat or drink; -----wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world, are ye subject

2 Tim. 4.
24, 25.

Part II. *A Preservative against P O P E R Y.*

41

to ordinances : touch not, tast not, handle not, which all are to perish ^{2 Col. 16}
with the using, after the Commandments and Doctrines of men ? ^{20, 21, 22.}

And yet, though they do not own the legal distinctions between clean and unclean things, their Consecrations would persuade one, that there were something more than a meer legal uncleanness in all Creatures, *viz.* that they are all possessed by the Devil and wicked Spirits ; for when they Consecrate Salt and Water to make their Holy-water, they first exorcise both the Salt and Water to cast the Devil out of them : and if such innocent Creatures are possessed, I doubt none can escape ; which has made me sometimes wonder, that they durst eat any thing before it was first exorcised, for fear the Devil should take possession of them with their meat. It is certain, if the Christian Religion takes away all such distinctions between Meat and Drinks, the meer abstaining from Flesh can be no part of Christian Worship, much less so satisfactory and meritorious as the Church of *Rome* pretends, when such Abstinence is appointed as a satisfactory Penance.

3dly, As for the Religion of Holy Places, Altars, Vestments, Utensils, the Church of *Rome* has infinitely out-done the *Jewish* Laws : instead of one Temple at *Jerusalem*, they have thousands to the full as Holy and Sacred as that, as may appear from their Rites of Consecration. Though herein, I confess, they differ, that the Temple of *Jerusalem* was only God's House, and that alone made it a Holy Place, because God was there peculiarly present ; but the Popish Churches derive their Sanctity, not so much from the presence of God, (for then they would be all equally Holy) as from some great and eminent Saint, who is peculiarly Worshipped there. It is a great argument of the opinion men have of the Holiness of any place, to go in Pilgrimage to it, not merely in Curiosity, but Devotion ; as if either going so far to see the place, were in itself an act of Religion, or their Prayers would be better heard there, than if they prayed at home : Thus they travel to *Jerusalem* to visit the Holy Land and the Sepulchre, and this may be thought in honour of our Saviour who Lived, and Died, and was Buried there : but otherwise I know

not:

not any Church or Chappel, which the most devout Pilgrims think worth visiting meerly upon the account of God or Christ: The severall Churches or Chappels of the Virgin, especially those which are the most famed for Miracles, or the Churches where the Reliques of some great and adored Saints are lodged, have their frequent Visits, for the sake of the Virgin, or of the Saints; but without some Saint Churches lose their Sacredness and Veneration, which I suppose is the reason why they always take care of some Reliques to give a Sacredness to them, without which no Church can be Consecrated; that is, its Dedication to the Worship of God, cannot make it Holy, unless some Saint take possession of it by his or her Reliques.

This, I confess, is not *Judaism*, for under the *Jewish* Law, all Holiness of things or places was derived from their relation to God; now the Names, and Reliques, and wonder-working Images of Saints and the Blessed Virgin, give the most peculiar and celebrated Holiness; and whether this be not at least to ascribe such a Divinity to them, as the Pagans did to their Deified Men and Women, to whom they erected Temples and Altars, let any impartial Reader judge. Those must have a good share of Divinity, who can give Holiness to any thing else.

But since they must have Holy Places, and something to answer the *Jewish* Superstition, who cried, *The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD*, I cannot blame them for making choice of Saints to inhabitate their Churches, and sanctifie them with their presence, since under the Gospel God is no more present in one place than in another: He dwelt indeed in the Temple of *Jerusalem* by Types and Figures, but that was but a Type of God's dwelling in Humane Nature: the Body of Christ was the true Temple, as he told the *Jews*, *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up*; which he spake of the Temple of his Body: And now Christ is ascended into Heaven, there is no Temple on Earth; and therefore if they will have Temples, they must have the Temples of Saints, for the Presence of God is now no more confined to a House, than his Providence is to the Land of *Judea*, as it was in a very peculiar manner, while the Temple stood

stood there. God dwells not on Earth now, as he did among the *Jews*, but his Presence, *viz.* our Lord Jesus Christ, is removed into Heaven, and therefore he has no House on Earth to answer to the *Jewish* Temple, as the Ancient Fathers asserted that the Christians had neither Temples nor Altars; The Christian Church indeed is a holy and living Temple, wherein the Holy Spirit dwells, but that is built not with Stones or Brick, but of living Saints; and therefore the Holiness of Places, and Altars, and Garments, &c. which makes up so great a part of the *Roman* Religion, is a manifest Corruption of the Simplicity of the Christian Worship. The *Jewish* Temple made that Worship most acceptable to God, which was offered there, because it was a Type of Christ, and signified the acceptance of all our Prayers and Religious Services, as offered up to God only in the Name of Christ; but to think that any place is so Holy now, that the bare visiting it, or praying in it, should bestow a greater holiness upon us, and all we do, should expiate our Sins, or merit a Reward, is no better than *Jewish* or *Pagan* Superstition.

4thly, That the Church of *Rome* does attribute Divine Virtues and Powers to senseless and inanimate Things, is so evident from that great Veneration they pay to the Reliques, and those great Vertues they ascribe to them, from their Consecrations of their *Agnus Dei*, their Wax-candles, Oyl, Bells, Crosses, Images, Ashes, Holy-water, for the Health of Soul and Body, to drive away evil Spirits, to allay Storms, to heal Diseases, to pardon *Venial*, and sometimes Mortal Sins, meerly by kissing or touching them, carrying them in their hands, wearing them about their necks, &c. that no man can doubt of it who can believe his own eyes, and read their Offices, and see what the daily Practice of their Church is. Whoever has a mind to be satisfied about it, needs only read *Dr. Brevint's Saul and Samuel at Endor*, Chap. 15. These things look more like Charms than Christian Worship; and are a great Profanation of the Divine Grace and Spirit; indeed they argue that such men do not understand, what Grace and Sanctification means, who think that little Images of Wax, that Candles, that Oyl, that Water and Salt, that Bells, that Crosses, can be sancti-
fied.

sified by the Spirit of God, and convey Grace and Sanctification by the sight, or sound, or touch, or such external applications. Christ has given his Holy Spirit to dwell in us, which works immediately upon our minds and rational powers, and requires our concurrence to make his Grace effectual to cleanse and purifie our Souls, and to transform us into the Divine Image; the grace of the Spirit is to enlighten our Minds, to change our Wills, to govern and regulate our Passions, to instruct, to perswade, to admonish, to awaken our Consciences, to imprint and fix good thoughts in us, to inspire us with holy desires, with great hopes, with divine consolations, which may set us above the fears of the World, and the allurements of it, and give greater fervour to our Devotions, greater strength to our Resolutions, greater courage and constancy in serving God, than the bare powers of Reason, tho' enforced with supernatural Motives, could do. This is all the Sanctification the Gospel knows, and he who thinks that inanimate Things are capable of this Sanctification of the Spirit, or can convey such Sanctification to us by some Divine and invisible Effluvioms of Grace, may as well lodge Reason, and Understanding, and Will, and Passions in senseless matter, and receive it from them again by a kiss or touch. To be sure men who know what the Sanctification of the Spirit means, must despise such Fooleries as these.

34y, That all this encourages men to trust in an External Righteousness, is too plain to need a proof; and therefore I shall not need to insist long on it.

For 1. such External Rites are naturally apt to degenerate into Superstition, especially when they are very numerous: The Jewish Ceremonies themselves, their Circumcision, Sacrifices, Washings, Purifications, Temple, Altars, New Moons and Sabbaths, and other Festival Solemnities, were the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and a cloak for their Hypocrisy and great Immoralities, though they were never intended by God for the justification of a Sinner. For such External Rites are so much easier to carnal men, than to subdue their Lusts, and live a holy and vertuous Life, that they are willing to abound in such External Obser-

Observances, and hope that these will make Expiation for their other Sins; and therefore when the Typical use of these Ceremonies was fulfilled by Christ, the External Rites were Abrogated, that men might no longer place any hope or confidence in any thing which is merely External: And therefore that Church which fills up Religion with External Rites and Ceremonies, were there no other hurt in it, laies a Snare for Mens Souls, and tempts them to put their trust in an External Righteousness, without any regard to the Internal Purity of Heart and Mind.

Especially 2. when such External Rites are recommended as very acceptable to God, as satisfactions for our Sins, and meritorious of great rewards; and this is the use they serve in the Church of *Rome*, as you have already heard. They assert the necessity of Humane Satisfactions; And what are these satisfactory Works wherewith men must expiate their Sins? The principal of them are Fastings, that is abstaining from Flesh, and other Acts of Penance, as Whippings, Pilgrimages, and some Bodily severities, or Prayers, that is saying over such a number of *Ave-Maries*; or Alms; that is to pay for Indulgencies, or to purchase Masses for themselves, or their Friends in Purgatory, or to found some Religious Houses, or to enrich those that are; which are much more satisfactory and meritorious than common acts of Charity to the Poor: All which men may do, without the least sorrow for Sin, without any true devotion to God, without mortifying any one Lust. They mightily contend for the Merit of Works; but what are their Meritorious Works? Whoever reads the Lives of their Canoniz'd Saints, will easily see what it was that made them Saints: their Characters are usually made up of some *Romish* Superstitions, of their Devotions to the Virgin *Mary*, and their familiar Conversations with her, the severities of their Fasts, and other external Mortifications, their frequenting the Mass, the great numbers of their *Ave-Maries*, pretences to Raptures and Visions, and such wild Extravagancies as made them suspected of Madness, while they lived, and Canoniz'd them for Saints, when they were dead: Other things may be added to fill up their Stories, but these are the glorious Accomplish-

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ments, especially of the more Modern Saints: for no man must be a Saint at *Rome*, who is not a famous Example of Popish Superstitions.

Monkery is thought the most perfect State of Religion among them, and has even Monopolized the Name, for no other persons are called *the Religious*, but those who belong to one Order or other: And wherein does the Perfection of Monkery consist?

1. In the Vows of Cælibacy, Poverty, and Obedience to the Superiors of their Order, which are all External things, no Virtues in themselves, and very often the occasion of great Wickedness.
2. In the strictest Observance of the External Rites and Ceremonies of their Religion; of Masses, and *Ave-Maries*, and Fastings, and Penances, and many of them would be glad, if they could go Pilgrimages too. These things are in perfection in their Monasteries and Nunneries, with such additional Superstitions as are peculiar to particular Orders. As for other true Christian Virtues, they may as soon be found without the Walls of the Monastery, as within.

Now when such External Rites and Observances shall be judged Satisfaction and Expiations for Sin; shall be thought the most highly meritorious, shall be made the Characters of their greatest Saints, and the most perfect state of Religion; I cannot see how any true thorough-paced *Romanist*, can aim at any thing but a Ceremonial Righteousness.

Indeed the true reason why any thinking men are so fond of an External and Ceremonial Righteousness, is to excuse them from true and real Holiness of Life: all men know that if they mortify their Lusts, they need not afflict their Bodies with Fastings, and other severities: that if they have their Conversation in Heaven, they need not travel in Pilgrimages to *Jerusalem* or *Loretto*; that if they take care to obey the Laws of the Gospel, they need no satisfactions for their Sins, nor no works of Merit or Supererogation, which are nothing else but meritorious and supererogating satisfactions; for all men know, that in the Offices of Piety and Vertue, they can never do more than is their Duty; and therefore as nothing can be matter of Merit, which is our Duty,

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so the true intention of all Merits and Works of Supererogation, are to supply the place of Duty, and to satisfy for their Sins, or to purchase a Reward, which they have no title to, by doing their Duty; but a good man, who by believing in Christ, and obeying him, has an interest in his Merits, and a title to the Gospel-Promises of Pardon and Eternal Life, needs none of these Satisfactions, Merits, or Supererogations. Now would any man who believes that he cannot be saved without mortifying his Lusts, be at the trouble of Whippings and Fastings, &c. not to mortify his Lusts, but to keep them, and to make satisfaction for them? Would any man travel to *Jerusalem*, or the Shrine of any Saint, who believes he shall not be forgiven, unless he leaves his Sins behind him, which he might as well have parted with at home? The true notion of Superstition is, when men think to make satisfaction for neglecting or transgressing their Duty, by doing something which is not their Duty, but which they believe to be highly pleasing to God, and to merit much of him: Now no man who believes that he cannot please God without doing his Duty, would be so fond of doing his Duty, and doing that which is not his Duty, nor pleasing to God, into the bargain.

3. And yet these meritorious and satisfactory Superstitions are very troublesome to most men, and though they are willing to be at some pains rather than part with their Lusts, yet they would be at as little trouble as possibly they can; and herein the Church of *Rome*, like a very indulgent Mother, has consulted their ease; for one man may satisfy for another, and communicate his Merits to him: and therefore those who, by their Friends or Money, can procure a vicarious Back, need not Whip themselves; they may Fast, and say over their Beads, and perform their Penances and Satisfactions by another, as well as if they did it themselves; or they may purchase Satisfactions and Merits out of the Treasury of the Church, that is, they may buy Indulgencies and Pardons; or it is but entering into some Confraternity, and then you shall share in their Merits and Satisfactions. This is an imputed Righteousness with a witness, and I think very External too, when men can satisfy and merit by Proxies.

4. And I think it may pass for an External Righteousness too, when men are sanctified and pardoned by Reliques, Holy-water, Consecrated Beads, Bells, Candles, *Agnus Dei's*, &c. And how unlike is all this to the Religion of our Saviour, to that purity of Heart and Mind the Gospel exacts, and to those means of Sanctification, and methods of Piety and Vertue it prescribes? Whoever considers what Christian Religion is, can no more think these Observances Christian Worship, than he can mistake Popish Legends for the Acts of the Apostles.

II. Let us now consider what kind of Worship Christ has prescribed to his Disciples: And the general account we have of it 4 John 23, 24. *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him: God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Now there are three things included in this description of Gospel-Worship:

1. That we must Worship God under the Notion of a Pure and Infinite Spirit. 2. That we must Worship him under the Character of a Father. 3. That we must Worship him with the Mind and Spirit.

First, We must Worship God under the Notion of a Pure and Infinite Spirit, who has now confined his peculiar Presence to no place, as he formerly did to the Temple at *Jerusalem*; for this was the present Dispute, Whether God would be Worshipped at the Temple at *Jerusalem*, or *Samaria*; as I observed above: In opposition to which, our Saviour tells the Woman, that God is a Spirit, and therefore not confined to any place; he is every-where, and present with us every-where, and may be worshipped every-where by devout and pious Souls: that though for Typical Reasons he had a Typical and Symbolical Presence under the *Jewish* Dispensation, yet this was not so agreeable to his Nature, who is a Spirit, and therefore he must not now be sought for in Houses of Wood and Stone.

And indeed the Reformation of the Divine Worship must begin in rectifying our Notions and Apprehensions of God; for such we apprehend God to be, such a kind of Worship we shall pay him;

Part II. *A Preservative against P O P E R Y.*

49

him ; as is evident from the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Pagan* Worship, which was fitted to the Nature and History of their Gods ; for where there are no Instituted Rites of Worship, all mankind conclude, that the Nature of God is the best Rule of his Worship, for all Beings are best pleased with such Honours, as are suitable to their Natures, and no Being can think himself Honoured by such Actions as are a contradiction to his own Nature and Perfections.

Now if God will be Worshipped more like a pure and infinite Spirit under the Gospel, than he was under the Law ; if this be the fundamental Principle of Gospel-Worship, that God is a Spirit, and must be Worshipped as a Spirit, I think it is plain, that nothing is more unlike a pure Spirit, than a material Image ; nothing more unlike an infinite Spirit, which can have no shape or figure, than a finite and figured Image, made in the likeness of a man, or of any thing in Heaven and Earth ; nothing more unlike an infinite Spirit, which is Life, and Mind, and Wisdom, than a dead and senseless Image ; and if under the Law, where God suited his Worship more to a Typical Dispensation than to his own Nature, he would not allow of the Worship of Images, much less is this an acceptable Worship to him under the Gospel, where he will be Worshipped as a pure Spirit, for there is nothing in the World more unlike a Living, Infinite, Omnipotent, Omniscient Spirit, than a little piece of dead senseless figured Gold or Silver, Wood or Stone, whatever shape the Carver or Engraver please to give it, since God has none. Now would any man, who understands this, that God is a Spirit, and will under the Gospel be Worshipped as a Spirit, should he go into many Popish Churches and Chappels, and see a vast number of Images and Pictures there, and People devoutly kneeling before them, suspect that these were Christian Oratories, or this Christian Worship, unless he knew something of the matter before ? For there you shall find the Pictures of God the Father, and the ever Blessed Trinity, in different Forms and Representations ; the Pictures of the Blessed Virgin, and other Saints and Martyrs devoutly Adored and Worshipped, and would any man guess, that this were to Worship
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God as a pure and infinite Spirit ? A Spirit cannot be Painted, and then to Worship God as a Spirit, cannot signifie to look upon any Representation of God, when we pray to him, which to be sure cannot give us the Idea of an infinite Spirit. He who Worships God as a Spirit, can have no regard to Matter and Sense, but must apply himself to God as to an infinite Mind, which no man can do, who gazes upon an Image, or contemplates God in the art and skill of a Painter ; for to pray to God in an Image, and in the same thought to consider him as a pure and infinite mind, is a contradiction ; for though a man, who believes God to be a Spirit, may be so absurd, as to worship him in an Image, yet an Image cannot represent a Spirit to him, and therefore either he must not think at all of the Image, and then methinks he should not look on an Image, when he worships God, for that is apt to make him think of it ; or if he does think of the Image, while his mind is filled with such gross and sensible representations, it is impossible in the same act to address to God, as to a pure invisible, and infinite Spirit. Which shews how unfit and improper Images are in the Worship of God ; for they must either be wholly useles, and such as a man must not so much as look or think on, (which is very irreconcilable with that Worship, which is paid to them in the Church of *Rome*) or while he is intent upon a Picture or Image, his mind is diverted from the contemplation of a pure and infinite Spirit, and therefore cannot, and does not Worship God as a Spirit.

And the same is true of the Images of Saints and the Blessed Virgin : for though to make Pictures of Men or Women, is no reproach to the Divine Nature, since they are not the Pictures or Images of God, who is a Spirit, but of those Saints, whom they are intended to represent, yet if all Christian Worship be the Worship of God, it is evident, that the Worship of Images, though they be not the Images of God, but of the Saints, can be no part of Christian Worship, because God must be Worshipped as a Spirit, and therefore not by any Image whatsoever.

Now the Church of *Rome* will not pretend, that the Worship of Saints and their Images, is a distinct and separate Worship from

from the Worship of God; but to justify themselves, they constantly affirm, that they Worship God in that Worship, which they pay to the Saints and their Images; for they know, that to do otherwise, would be to terminate their Worship upon Creatures, which they confess to be Idolatry, since all Religious Worship must terminate on God; and therefore should they give any Religious Worship to Creatures distinct and separate from that Worship they give to God, it were Idolatry upon their own principles.

Now if they Worship God in the Worship of Saints and their Images, then they Worship God in the Images of Saints, and that I think is to Worship him by Images: the Worship of a pure infinite and invisible Spirit will admit of no Images, whether of God or Creatures, as the Objects or Mediums of Worship.

But it may be said, that this is to graft our own Fancies and Imaginations upon Scripture; for though Christ does say, that God is a Spirit, and must be Worshipped in Spirit, he does not say, that to Worship God in Spirit is not to Worship him by an Image; but to Worship God in Spirit, in our Saviour's Discourse with the Woman of *Samaria*, is not opposed to Image-Worship, but to confining the Worship of God to a particular place, such as the Temple at *Jerusalem* and *Samaria* was; as I observed above. Now to this I answer:

1. To Worship God as a Spirit, does in the nature of the thing signify this; for to Worship God by any material or sensible Representations is not to Worship God as a Spirit; for an infinite Spirit cannot be represented by matter, nor by any shape and figure, because it neither is material, nor has any figure.

2. If God will not have his peculiar Presence confined to any place under the Gospel, much less will he be Worshipped by Images and Pictures, for it is not such a contradiction to the nature of an infinite Spirit, to shew himself more peculiarly present in one place than in another, as it is to be Worshipped by sensible Images and Pictures. Though God fills all places, there may be wise Reasons, why he should confine the Acts of Worship to
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some peculiar place, and such Typical Reasons there were for it under the Law, but there never can be any Reason, why a Spirit should be Represented and Worshipped by an Image, which is such a contradiction and dishonour to the nature of the Spirit; and therefore when God confined his Symbolical Presence to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, yet he strictly forbid the Worship of Images, and much less then will he allow of Image-Worship, when he will not so much as have a Temple.

3. For we must observe farther, that what our Saviour here says, God is a Spirit, and will be Worshipped in Spirit, is not a particular Direction, how to Worship God; but a general Rule to which the nature of our Worship must be conformed; and therefore it is our Rule, as far as the plain Reason of it extends. Under the Law they were not left to general Rules, but God determined the particular Rites and Ceremonies of his Worship himself; for under the Law God had not so plainly discovered his own nature to them, as he has done by his Son in the Gospel. *For no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten son, who is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him.* And therefore the nature of God was never made the Rule of Worship before. Tho' God was as much a Spirit under the Law, as he is under the Gospel, yet this was never assigned as a reason against Image-Worship, that God is a Spirit: but either that they saw no Likeness or Similitude in the Mountain, when God spake to them, 4 *Deut.* 15, 16. or that he is so great and glorious a Being, that nothing in the World is a fit Representation of him: *To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? --- It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, &c.* But that God is a Spirit, who has no shape and figure, is a much better Argument against Image-Worship, than all this; but this God had not so plainly declared to them; and if God forbid the Worship of Images, when he thought fit to give no other reason for it, but that he had never appeared to them in any Likeness or Similitude, or that he was too great to be Represented;

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we our selves may now judge, how unfit it is to Worship God by an Image, since our Saviour has declared, that he is a Spirit, who has no Likeness or Figure, and that now he expects to be Worshipped by us as a Spirit, and therefore without any Image or sensible Representation.

4. And yet some Learned men think, that our Saviour in these Words, had as well respect to the Worship of God by Images, as to his Worship in the Temple : for that he had respect to the Object as well as Place of Worship, is evident from what he adds, *ye worship ye know not what, we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews*; wherein he informs the Woman, that though she inquired only of the place of Worship, the *Samaritans* were guilty of a greater fault than setting up the Temple at *Samaria* in opposition to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, viz. in a false Object, or an Idolatrous manner of Worship, they Worshipping a Dove as the Symbol and Representation of God : and thus to Worship God in Spirit, is expressly opposed to Worshipping God by Images.

5^{ly}. However this comes much to one ; for if God being a Spirit his Worship must not be confined to any place or Symbolical Presence ; then he must not be Worshipped by an Image, for an Image is a Representative Presence of God, or of the Saints ; for the use of Images is to represent that Being whom we Worship as present to us : and therefore if men consider what they do, they go to Images, as to Divine Presences, to Worship. Images, which are set up in Churches and Chappels for the Worship of God, or of the Saints, are confined to places, and make those places as much appropriate and peculiar places of Worship, as the *Jewish* Temple was, excepting that the Temple was but one, and they are many. Heathen Temples were the Houses of their Gods, or of their Images, which were the Presence of their Gods ; and if we must not appropriate the Presence of God to any place, then we must not Worship him by Images, which are of no use but to represent God as sensibly present, with the Image, or in the place, where the Image is. If God be better Worshipped before an Image, than without one, then the Worship of God is more confined to that place, where an Image is, than to those places,

which have no Images. I cannot see how to avoid this, that if God must be Worshipped by Images, than there must be appropriate places of Worship, viz. where the Image is, if there be no appropriate places of Worship under the Gospel, like the Temple at *Jerusalem*, then God must not be Worshipped by Images; for an Image must be in some place, and if God must be Worshipped at, or before his Image, then that is the proper and peculiar place of Worship, where his Image is; nay, though the Image be not fixt to any place, but be carried about with us, yet if we must Worship God by Images, the Image is not only the Object, but makes the place of Worship, for there we must Worship God, where his Image is, if we must Worship him before his Image. It is impossible to separate the Notion of Image-Worship, from the Notion of a peculiar and appropriate place of Worship; for the Image determines the place, as the Presence of the Object; does and as under the Gospel we may Worship God any where, because he is an infinite Spirit, and fills all places, and is equally present with all devout Worshippers, where-ever they Worship him: So where the Image is Consecrated for a Divine Presence, it is not only the Object, but the peculiar place of Worship, because God is peculiarly present there, or more acceptably worshipped there, than where there is no Image. So that if a peculiar and appropriate place of worship be contrary to the notion of an infinite Spirit, the worship of Images is much more so, for besides that they are gross and corporeal representations of a Spirit, they are Divine Presences too, and appropriate places of worship.

Secondly, As God must be worshipped under the notion of a Spirit, so under the character of a Father: as our Saviour expressly tells us; *The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him*, and therefore he taught his Disciples to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven*. Under the Law God was worshipped as a King, and that not so much as the King of the whole world, but as in a peculiar manner the King of *Israel*. *The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble, he sitteth between the Cherubims* (in his Tem-

ple at Jerusalem) *let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zi- 99* *psal. 1.*
on, and he is high above all people. But under the Gospel the pe- 2
 culiar character of God is a Father, and that not only as he is the
 maker of all men, and so the Father of all, but as he is the Fa-
 ther of Christ, and in him the Father of all Christians. Now
 this makes a vast difference in our worship, from what is daily
 practised in the Church of *Rome.* For ✓

1. When we pray to God as *our Father*, we must pray to him
 as dwelling in Heaven: as our Saviour teaches us to say, *Our Fa-*
ther, which art in Heaven. For as a Father, Heaven is his House
 and Habitation; *in my Fathers House are many mansions*, that is, in 14 John 2.
 in Heaven, which is his House as a Father, as the Temple at *Jeru-*
salem, was his Palace considered as the King of *Israel*; and this is
 one reason our Saviour intimates, why the presence of God shall
 no longer be confined to any particular place or Temple, because
 he shall be worshipped as the universal Father, not as the King of
Jury; Now when he is to be worshipped as a Father from all parts
 of the world, he must have such a Throne and presence to which
 all the World may equally resort, and that can be no other then
 his Throne in Heaven, whither we may send up our Prayers from
 all Corners of the Earth; but had he confined his Presence to a-
 ny place on Earth, as he did to the Temple of *Jerusalem*, the rest
 of the World must have been without God's peculiar Presence,
 could have had no Temple nor place of Worship, but at such a
 distance that they could never have come at it: for though God
 fills all places, it is a great absurdity to talk of more Symbolical
 Presences of God than one: for a Symbolical Presence confines
 the unlimited Presence of God to a certain place in order to cer-
 tain ends, as to receive the Worship, that is paid him, and to an-
 swer the Prayers, that are made to him; and so have more than
 One such Presence as this, is like having more Gods than One.

So that all our Worship under the Gospel, must be directed to
 God in Heaven; and that is a plain argument, that we must not
 Worship God in Images on Earth, for they neither can represent
 to us the Majesty of God in Heaven, nor is God present with the
 Image to receive our Worship there: if God must now be Wor-

shipped as dwelling in Heaven, it is certain there can be no Object of our Worship on Earth; for though God fill all places with his Presence, yet he will be Worshipped only as sitting on his Throne in Heaven; and then I am sure he must not be Worshipped in an Image on Earth, for that is not his Throne in Heaven. This the Mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies was an Emblem of; for the Holy of Holies in the *Jewish* Temple, did signify Heaven, and the Mercy-seat covered with Cherubims, signified the Throne of God in Heaven, whither we must lift up our Eyes and Hearts when we pray to him: for though it is indifferent from what place we put up our Prayers to God, while we have regard to the External Decency of Religious Worship, yet it is not indifferent whither we direct our Prayers; for we must direct our Prayers

4 Heb. 16. *to the throne of grace, if we would obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* Now the Throne of Grace is only in Heaven, whither Christ is ascended to make Atonement for us; for he is the true Propitiatory or Mercy-seat: And therefore if to direct our Prayers to God, to his Picture or Image, or to the Images of the Virgin *Mary*, or any other Saints, did not provoke God to jealousy, yet it would do us no good, unless such Images are God's Throne of Grace, for all other Prayers are lost, which are not directed to God on his Throne of Grace, where alone he will receive our Petitions. If a Prince would receive no Petitions but what were presented to him sitting on such a Throne, all men would be sensible how vain a thing it were to offer any Petition to him else-where. And yet thus it is here: A Sinner dare not, must not approach the Presence of God, but only on his Mercy-seat and Throne of Grace; for any where else our God is a Consuming Fire, a Just and a Terrible Judge: now God has but one Throne of Grace, and that is in Heaven, as the Mercy-seat was in the Holy of Holies, which was a Type of Heaven; thither Christ ascended with his Blood to sprinkle the Mercy-seat, and to cover it with a Cloud of Incense, which are the Prayers of the Saints, as the High-Priest did once a Year in the Typical Holy Place. Which is a plain proof, that all our Prayers must be immediately directed to God in Heaven, where Christ dwells, who

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is our true Propitiatory and Mercy-seat, who has sprinkled the Throne of God with his own Bloud, and has made it a Throne of Grace, and where he offers up our Prayers as Incense to God:

2. To Worship God as our Father, signifies to Worship him only in the Name and Mediation of his Son Jesus Christ: for he is our Father only in Jesus Christ, and we can call him Father in no other Name. By the right of Creation he is our Lord, and our Judge, but he is the Father of Sinners only by Adoption and Grace, and we are Adopted only in Christ: so that if Christian Worship be the Worship of God as a Father, then we must pray to God in no other Name, but of his own Eternal Son: The Virgin *Mary*, though she were the Mother of Christ, yet does not make God our Father; and then no other Saint, I presume, will pretend to it: which shews what a contradiction the Invocation of Saints is to the Nature of Christian Worship, and how unavailable to obtain our requests of God. If we must Worship God only as our Father, then we must Worship him only in the Name of his Son, for he owns himself our Father in no other Name; and if he will hear our Prayers, and answer our humble Petitions only as a Father, then he will hear only those Prayers which are made to him in the Name of his Son: How great Favourites soever the Blessed Virgin and other Saints may be, if God hear Prayers only as a Father, it is to no purpose to pray to God in their Names, for he hears us not.

3. To Worship God as a Father, signifies to pray to him with the humble assurance and confidence of Children: This is *the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father*. For because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying *Abba Father*. A dutiful Son does not question his Father's good will to him, nor readiness to hear and answer all his just requests, he depends upon the kindness of his Father, and his interest and relation to him, and seeks for no other Friends and Favourites to recommend him: And upon this account also the Invocation of Saints is a contradiction to the Gospel-Spirit of Prayer, to that Spirit of Adoption, which teaches us to cry *Abba Father*; for surely those have not the hope, and assurance, and *intimacy* of Children,

for it, which deprives them of all the means of Knowledge: for she will not allow them to believe their Senses, which is one way of knowing things, and the most certain we have: and yet she commands us to believe Transubstantiation, which no man can do who believes his Senses: and if I must not believe my Senses in so plain a matter, as what is Bread and Wine, I know no reason I have to believe them in any thing, and then there is an end of all Knowledge, that depends on Sense; as the proof of the Christian Religion itself does: for Miracles are a sensible proof, and if I must not trust my Senses, I cannot rely on Miracles, because I cannot know, whether there be any such thing as a real Miracle.

The Church of *Rome* also forbids men the use of Reason in matters of Religion, will not allow men to judge for themselves, nor to examine the Reasons of their Faith, and what knowledge any man can have without exercising his Reason and Understanding, I cannot guess; for to know without understanding sounds to me like a contradiction.

She also denies Christians the use of the Bible, which is the only means to know the revealed Will of God: and when men must neither believe their Senses, nor trust their Reason, nor read the Scripture, it is easie to guess what knowing and understanding Christians, they must needs be.

But it may be said, that notwithstanding this, the Church of *Rome* does Instruct her Children in the true Catholick Faith, though she will not venture them to judge for themselves, nor to read the Scriptures, which is the effect of her great care of them, to keep them Orthodox: for when men trust to their own fallible Reasons, and private Interpretations of Scripture, it is a great hazard that they do not fall into one Heresie or other: but when men are taught the pure Catholick Faith without any danger of Error and Heresie, is not this much better, then to suffer them to reason and judge for themselves, when it is great odds, but they will judge wrong.

Now this would be something indeed, did the Church of *Rome* take care to Instruct them in all necessary Doctrines, and to teach

teach nothing, but what is true, and could such men, who thus tamely receive the dictates of the Church, be said to know and to understand their Religion. How far the Church of *Rome* is from doing the first, all Christians in the world are sensible but themselves, but that is not our present dispute; for though the Church of *Rome* did instruct her people into the true Christian Faith, yet such men cannot be said to know and understand their Religion; and to secure the Faith by destroying knowledge, is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, which is to make men wise and understanding Christians. For no man understands his Religion, who does not in some measure know the reasons of his Faith, and judge whether they be sufficient or not; who knows not how to distinguish between Truth and Error, who has no Rule to go by, but must take all upon trust, and the credit of his Teachers; who believes whatever he is told, and learns his Creed, as School-boys do their Grammar, without understanding it: This is not an active, but a kind of passive knowledge; such men receive the impression, that is made on them, as wax does, and understand no more of the matter; now will any one call this the knowledge and understanding of a man, or the Discipline of a Child?

But suppose there were some men so dull and stupid, that they could never rise higher; that they are not capable of inquiring into the reasons of things, but must take up their Religion upon trust; yet will any man say, that this is the utmost perfection of knowledge, that any Christian must aim at? is this the meaning of *the word of God dwelling in us richly in all wisdom*? is ^{3 Col. 16.} this the way to give an answer to any one, *who asks a reason of the hope that is in us*? the perfection of Christian knowledge is a great and glorious attainment; to understand the secrets of God's Laws, those depths and mysteries of wisdom and goodness in the oeconomy of Man's Salvation; to see the Analogy between the Law and the Gospel, how the Legal Types and ancient Prophecies received their accomplishment in Christ, how far the Gospel has advanced us above the state of Nature, and the Law of *Moses*; what an admirable design it was to redeem the world by the

Incarnation and Death and sufferings and intercession of the Son of God; what mysteries of Wisdom and Goodness the Gospel contains; the knowledge of which is not only the perfection of our understandings, but raises and ennobles our minds, and transforms us into the Divine Image: These things were revealed, that they might be known, not that they should be concealed from the world, or neglected and despised; but this is a knowledge, which cannot be attained without diligent and laborious inquiries, without using all the reason and understanding we have, in searching the Scriptures, and all other helps which God has afforded us.

Now if Christian Knowledge be something more than to be able to repeat our Creed, and to believe it upon the authority of our Teachers, if the Gospel of our Saviour was intended to advance us to a true manly knowledge, Christ and the Church of *Rome* seem to have two very different designs, our Lord in causing the Gospel to be wrote and publisht to the world, the other in concealing it as much as she can, and suffering no body to read it without her leave, as a dangerous Book, which is apt to make men Hereticks; for it is hard to conceive, that the Gospel was written, that it might not be read, and then one would guess, that he by whose authority and inspiration the Gospel was written, and those by whose authority it is forbid to be read, are not of a mind in this matter.

1. This I think in the first place is an evident proof, that to forbid Christian people to read and study and meditate on the word of God, is no Gospel Doctrine, unless not to read the Bible, be a better way to improve in all true Christian knowledge and wisdom, than to read it: for that is the duty of Christians, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; this was one great end of publishing the Gospel to the world, to enlighten and improve mens understandings, as well as to govern their Lives; and though we grant, men may be taught the principles of Christian Religion, as Children are, without reading the Bible, yet if they will but grant, that studying and meditating on the holy Scriptures, is the best and only

ly way to improve in all true Christian knowledge, this shows how contrary this prohibition of reading the Scriptures is to the great design of the Gospel, to perfect our knowledge in the mysteries of Christ.

2/y. This is a mighty presumption also against Transubstantiation, that it is no Gospel Doctrine, because it overthrows the very Fundamental Principles of Knowledge, which is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, to advance Divine Knowledge to the utmost perfection it can attain in this world.

Whoever has his eyes in his head must confess, that the Doctrine of Transubstantiation is contrary to Sense; for were our senses to be Judges of this matter, they would pronounce the Bread and Wine after Consecration, to be Bread and Wine still; and therefore what ever reason there may be to believe it not to be Bread and Wine, but Flesh and Blood, yet it must be confessed, that our Faith in this matter contradicts our sense; for even Roman Catholick Eyes and Noses and Hands, can see and feel and smell nothing but Bread and Wine; and if to our senses it appears to be nothing but Bread and Wine, those who believe it to be the Natural Body and Blood of Christ, believe contrary to what they see.

Thus there is nothing more contrary to the natural notions we have of things, than the Doctrine of Transubstantiation: for if this Doctrine be true, then the same individual body of Christ is in Heaven at the right hand of God, and on ten thousand Altars, at a great distance from each other on earth, at the same time. Then a humane Body is contracted into the compass of a Wafer, or rather subsists without any dimensions, *without extension of parts, and independent on place.*

Now not to dispute, whether this be true or false; my only inquiry at present is, whether this do not contradict those natural notions all men have of the properties of a Humane Body: let a man search his own mind, and try, whether he find any such notion of a Body, as can be present at more places than one at the same time: a Body that is without Extension, nay that has parts without Extension, and therefore without any distinction too:

for the parts of an Organical Body must be distinguished by place and scituation, which cannot be, if they have no Extension ; a Body, which is present without occupying a place, or being in a place : if we have no such natural notion of a Body, as I am sure I have not, and I believe no man else has, then let Transubstantiation be true or false, it is contrary to the natural notions of our minds, which is all I am at present concerned for : Thus let any man try, if he have any notion of an accident subsisting without any substance, of a white and soft and hard nothing ; of the same body, which is extended and not extended, which is in a place, and not in a place at the same time : for in Heaven, I suppose, they will grant, the Body of Christ fills a place, and has the just dimensions and proportions of a Humane Body, and at the same time in the Host the very same body is present, without any extension; and independent on place ; that is, the same body at the same time is extended and not extended, fills a place and fills no place, which, I suppose, they mean by being *Independent on place* ; now is and is not, is a contradiction to natural Reason, and I have no other natural notion of it, but as of a contradiction, both parts of which cannot be true. Let us then briefly examine, whether it be likely, that Transubstantiation, which contradicts the evidence of sense, and the natural notions of our Minds, should be a Gospel Doctrine, considering the Gospel as the most Divine and excellent Knowledge, and most perfective of Humane understandings. For,

1. This Doctrine of Transubstantiation, is so far from perfecting our Knowledge, that it destroys the very Principles of all Humane Knowledge : All natural knowledge is owing either to Sense or Reason, and Transubstantiation contradicts both, and whoever believes it, must believe contrary to his Senses and Reason, which if it be to believe like a Catholick, I am sure, is not to believe like a man ; if the perfection of knowledge consist in contradicting our own Faculties, Transubstantiation is the most perfect knowledge in the world ; but however, I suppose no man will say, that this is the natural perfection of knowledge, which overthrows the most natural notions we have of things : and yet

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2. All supernatural Knowledge must of necessity be grafted upon that which is natural; for we are capable of revealed and supernatural Knowledge, only as we are by nature reasonable Creatures, and destroy Reason, and Beasts are as fit to be preached too as Men: And yet to contradict the plain and most natural notions of our minds, is to destroy Humane Reason, and to leave Mankind no Rule or Principle to know and judge by. No man can know any thing, which contradicts the Principles of Natural Knowledge, because he has only these natural Principles to know by; and therefore however his Faith may be improved by it, he forfeits his natural Knowledge, and has no supernatural Knowledge in the room of it: For how can a man know and understand that which is contrary to all the natural Knowledge and Understanding he has? There may be some revealed Principles of Knowledge super-added to natural Principles, and these things we may know to be so, though we have no natural Notion of them, and this perfects, because it enlarges our Knowledge; as the Knowledge of three Divine Persons super-added to the natural Belief of one Supreme God; which does not overthrow the belief of one God, but only acquaints us, that there are three Divine Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, which, whatever difficulty there may be in apprehending it, yet overthrows no natural Notion: this is an improvement of Knowledge, because we know all we did before, and we know something more, that as there is one God, so there are three Persons, who are this one God; and though we have no natural Notion of this, how three Persons are one God, because we know no distinction between Person and Essence in Finite Beings, yet we have no natural Notion, that there cannot be more Persons than one in an Infinite Essence; and therefore this may be known by Revelation, because there is no natural Notion against it. But now I can never know that which is contrary to all the Principles of Knowledge I have; such men may believe it, who think it a Vertue to believe against Knowledge: Who can believe that to be true, which they know to be false? For whatever is contrary to the plain and necessary Principles of Reason, which all Mankind agree in, I know must be

be false, if my *Faculties* be true, and if my *Faculties* be not true, then I can know nothing at all, neither by Reason nor Revelation, because I have no true *Faculties* to know with: Revelation is a Principle of Knowledge as well as Faith, when it does not contradict our natural Knowledge of things, for God may teach us that which Nature does not teach; and thus Revelation improves, enlarges, and perfects Knowledge: in such cases Faith serves instead of natural Knowledge, the Authority of the Revelation instead of the natural Notions and Ideas of our Minds; but I can never know that by Revelation which contradicts my natural Knowledge; which would be not only to know that, which I have no natural Knowledge of, which is the knowledge of Faith, but to know that by Revelation, which by Reason and Nature I know cannot be; which is to know that, which I know cannot be known, because I know it cannot be:

So that Transubstantiation, which contradicts all the evidence of Sense and Reason, is not the Object of any Humane Knowledge, and therefore cannot be a Gospel-Revelation, which is to improve and perfect, not to destroy Humane Knowledge: I can never know it, because it contradicts all the Notions of my Mind; and I can never believe it without denying the truth of my *Faculties*, and no Revelation can prove my *Faculties* to be false; for I can never be so certain of the truth of any Revelation, as I am, that my *Faculties* are true; and could I be persuaded, that my *Faculties* are not true, but deceive me in such things, as I judge most certain and evident, then I can no more believe them as to any Revelation, than I can as to their natural Reasonings, for the same *Faculties* must judge of both, and if the Faculty be false, I can trust its judgment in neither.

3/y, The Doctrine of Transubstantiation destroys all possible certainty, what the true sense and interpretation of Scripture is, and thereby overthrows all supernatural Knowledge. The Scripture we know is Expounded to very different and contrary Senses, and made to countenance the most monstrous and absurd Doctrines; Witness all the ancient Heresies which have been Fathered on the Scriptures. Now what way have we to confute these

these Heresies, but to shew, either that the words of Scripture will not bare such a sence, or at least do not necessarily require it; that such an Interpretation is contrary to Sense, to Reason, to the natural Notions we have of God, and therefore is in itself absurd and impossible? But if Transubstantiation be a Gospel-Doctrine, I desire any Papist, among all the ancient Heresies, to pick out any Doctrine more absurd and impossible, more contrary to Sense and Reason, than the Doctrine of Transubstantiation is; and then it is no Argument against any Doctrine, or any Exposition of Scripture, that it is absurd and impossible, contrary to Sense and Reason, for so Transubstantiation is; and if we may believe one absurd Doctrine, we may believe five hundred, how absurd soever they be: And then what defence has any man against the most monstrous Corruptions of the Christian Faith? Is this the way to improve Knowledge, to destroy all the certain marks and characters of Truth and Error, and to leave no Rule to judge by? If the design of the Gospel was to improve our Minds by a knowing and understanding Faith, Transubstantiation, which overthrows the certainty both of natural and revealed Knowledge, can be no Gospel-Doctrine.

3. The Authority of an infallible Judge, whom we must believe in every thing, without examining the reasons of what he affirms, nay, though he teaches such Doctrines as appear to us most expressly contrary to Sense, and Reason, and Scripture, is no Gospel-Doctrine, because it is not the way to make men wise and understanding Christians, which is the great design of the Gospel, for to suspend the exercise of Reason and Judgment, is not the way to improve mens Knowledge: an infallible Teacher, and an infallible Rule do indeed mightily contribute to the improvement of Knowledge; but such an infallible Judge, as the Church of *Rome* boasts of, can only make men ignorant and stupid Believers: For there is a vast difference between an infallible Teacher, and an infallible Judge, which few men observe, at least have not well explained; for an infallible Teacher is onely an external Proponent, and while men only teach and instruct, how infallible soever they are, every man is at liberty to use his own Reason.

son and Judgment; for though the Teacher be infallible, he that learns must use his own Reason and Judgment, unless a man can learn without it: But now an infallible Judge is not contented to teach and instruct, which is an appeal to the Reason of Mankind, but he usurps the office of every mans private Reason and Judgment, and will needs judge for all Mankind, as if he were *an Universal Soul, an Universal Reason and Judgment*, that no man had any Soul, any Reason or Judgment but himself: for if every man has a private Reason and Judgment of his own, surely every man must have a right to the private exercise of it; that is, to judge for himself; and then there can be no such universal Judge, who must be that to every man, which in other cases his own private Reason and Judgment is, which is to un-Soul all Mankind in matters of Religion. And therefore though there have been a great many infallible Teachers, as *Moses* and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, yet none ever pretended to be infallible Judges, but the Church of *Rome*; that is, none ever pretended to deny People a liberty of judging for themselves, or ever exacted from them an universal submission to their infallible Judgment without exercising any act of Reason and Judgment themselves. I am sure Christ and his Apostles left People to the exercise of their own Reason and Judgment, and require it of them; they were infallible Teachers, but they did not judge for all Mankind, but left every man to judge for himself, as every man must and ought, and as every man will do, who has any Reason and Judgment of his own: but an infallible Judge, who pretends to judge for all men, treats Mankind like Brutes, who have no reasonable Souls of their own.

But you'll say, this distinction between an infallible Teacher and an infallible Judge, is very nice and curious, but seems to have nothing in it; for does not he who teaches infallibly, judge infallibly too? And must I not submit my private Judgment, which all men allow to be fallible, to a publick infallible Judgment, which I know to be infallible? If I know that I may be deceived, and that such a man cannot be deceived, is it not reasonable for me to be governed by his Judgment, rather than my own?

Part II. *A Preservative against P O P E R Y.*

69

I answer, All this is certainly true as any demonstration, but then it is to be considered, that I cannot be so certain of any man's Infallibility, as to make him my Infallible Judge, in whose Judgment I must acquiesce, without exercising any Reason or Judgment of my own: and the reason is plain, because I cannot know that any man teaches infallibly, unless I am sure that he teaches nothing that is contrary to any natural or revealed Law. Whoever does so, is so far from being Infallible, that he actually errs; and whether he does so, I cannot know, unless I may judge of his Doctrine by the Light of Nature, and by Revelation: and therefore though there may be an Infallible Teacher, there never can be any Infallible Judge, to whom I must submit my own Reason and Judgment, because I must judge of his Doctrine myself, before I can know that he is Infallible.

As for instance, when *Moses* appeared as a Prophet and a Law-giver to the Children of *Israel*, there was no written Law, but only the Law of Nature; and therefore those great Miracles he wrought, gave authority to his Laws, because he contradicted no necessary Law of Nature: but had any other person at that time wrought as many Miracles as *Moses* did, and withal taught the Worship of many Gods, either such as the *Agyptians*, or any other Nations worshipped at that time, this had been reason enough to have rejected him as a false Prophet, because it is contrary to the natural Worship of one Supream God, which the Light of Nature teaches.

When Christ appeared, there was a written Law, the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, and all the Miracles he wrought could not have proved him a true Prophet, had he contradicted the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and therefore his Doctrine was to be examined by them, and accordingly he appeals to *Moses* and the Prophets to bear testimony to his Person and Doctrine, and exhorts them to search the Scriptures, which gave testimony to him: and how the Miracles he wrought gave authority to any new Revelations he made of God's Will to the World, since he did not contradict the old. The Law of Nature, and the Laws of *Moses*, were the Laws of God; and God cannot contra-

dict himself: and therefore the Doctrine of all new Prophets, even of Christ himself, was to be examined, and is to be examined to this day, by the Law and the Prophets; and therefore though he was certainly an Infallible Teacher, yet men were to judge of his Doctrine, before they believed him; and he did not require them to lay aside their Reason and Judgment, and submit to his Infallible Authority, without Examination.

So that all this while, there could be no Infallible Judge to whom all men were bound to submit their own private Reason and Judgment, and to receive all their Dictates as divine Oracles, without Examination; because they could not know them to be such Infallible Teachers, till they had examined their Doctrine by the Light of Nature and the Law of *Moses*: and we cannot to this day know that *Moses* and Christ were true Prophets, but in the same way.

Since the writing of the New Testament, there is a farther Test of an Infallible Teacher, if there be any such in the world; that he neither contradicts the Light of Nature, nor the true intent of the Law of *Moses*, nor alter or add to the Gospel of Christ; and therefore there can be no Infallible Judge, because be he never so Infallible, we can never know that he is so, but by the agreement of his Doctrine with the Principles of Reason, with the Law and the Prophets, and with the Gospel of Christ; and therefore must examine his Doctrine by these Rules, and therefore must judge for our selves, and not suffer any man to judge for us, upon a pretence of his Infallibility.

Could I know that any man were Infallible, without judging of his Doctrine, then indeed there were some reason to believe all that he says, without any inquiry or examination; but this never was, never can be: and therefore though there may be an Infallible Teacher, there can be no Infallible Judge to whom I must submit my own Reason and Judgment, without asking any Questions. Which by the way shews, how ridiculous that Sophism is, *The Church has not erred, because she is Infallible*, when it is impossible for me to know she is Infallible, till by examining her Doctrine by an Infallible Rule I know, that she has not erred.

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And the truth is, it is well there can be no Infallible Judge ; for if there were, it would suspend and silence the Reason and Judgment of all Mankind : and what a knowing Creature would Man be in matters of Religion, when he must not reason, and must not judge ? just as knowing as a man can be without exercising any Reason and Judgment. And therefore not only the reason and nature of the thing proves, that there can be no Infallible Judge, but the design of Christ to advance humane Nature to the utmost perfection of Reason and Understanding in this World, proves that he never intended there should be any : for to take away the exercise of Reason and private Judgment, is not the way to make men wise and knowing Christians ; and if Christ allows us to judge for our selves, there can be no Infallible Judge, whose Office it shall be to judge for us all.

4ly. To pretend the Scripture to be an obscure or imperfect Rule, is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel to improve and perfect Knowledge : for if the Scripture be so obscure in the essential matters of Faith and Christian knowledge, that we cannot have any certainty what the true sense and interpretation of it is, without an Infallible Judge, then the Scriptures cannot improve our knowledge, because we cannot know what they are, we cannot understand their meaning, and therefore can learn nothing from them.

Yes you'll say, we may know their meaning, when they are expounded to us by an Infallible Judge : though the Scriptures are so obscure, that we cannot understand them without an Infallible Judge, yet we may certainly learn what the sense of Scripture is from such a Judge.

Now in answer to this, I observe, that though such an Infallible Judge should determine the sense of all obscure Texts of Scripture, (which neither the Pope nor Church of *Rome* have ever done) yet this would not be to understand the Scriptures, or to learn from the Scriptures, but only to rely on this Infallible Judge for the sense of Scripture : To understand the Scriptures, is to be able to give a reason, why I expound Scripture to such a sense, as that the words signifie so, that the circumstan-

ditions ; such as the Supremacy of the Pope, the Infallibility of Popes and General Councils, the Worship of Images, the Invocation of Saints, and the great Glory and Prerogatives of the Virgin *Mary*, the Doctrine of Purgatory, Indulgences, the Sacrament of Penance, &c. as necessary Doctrines as any that are recorded in Scripture, and the denial of which makes us all Hereticks and Schismatics, as the Church of *Rome* says. Though thanks be to God, as far as appears, we are no greater Hereticks and Schismatics, than the Apostles were, unless they are excused for not knowing these necessary Articles of Faith, and we are Hereticks for denying them, since the Church of *Rome* in the Council of *Trent* has decreed and published them,

2. These unwritten Traditions cannot supply the defects of a written Rule, because they are of uncertain Authority, and therefore not the Objects, much less the Rule, of a certain Faith and Knowledge. What is not written, but said to be delivered down from Age to Age by oral Tradition, and kept so privately, that the Church of God never heard of it for several hundred years, can never be proved but by Miracles, and they must be more credible Miracles too, than the School of the Eucharist, and the Legends of the Saints furnish us with; and yet I know of no better the Church of *Rome* has. It is impossible to prove, that a private Tradition cannot be corrupted ; it is unreasonable to think that any thing which concerns the necessary Articles of Faith or Rules of Worship, should be a private and secret Tradition for several Ages. Miracles themselves cannot prove any Tradition which is contrary to the written Rule, and the Catholick Faith of Christians for several Ages, as several of the *Trent*-Doctrines are ; nay, no Miracles can prove any new Article of Faith, which was never known before, without proving that Christ and his Apostles did not teach all things necessary to salvation ; which will go a great way to overthrow the truth and certainty of the Christian Faith : for Miracles themselves can never prove, that Christ and his Apostles taught that which the Christian Church never heard of before ; which is either to prove that the whole World had forgot what they had been once taught, which I doubt
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is not much for the credit of Tradition, or that the Church for several Ages did not teach all that Christ taught, which is no great reason to rely on the teachings of the Church; or to prove against matter of fact, that Christ and his Apostles taught that, which no body ever heard of, and I do not think a Miracle sufficient to prove that true, which every body knows to be false, or at least do not know it to be true, though they must have known it, if it had been true.

And does not every body now see, how improper unwritten Traditions are, to supply the Defects and Imperfections of the written Rule? for they can never make one Rule, because they are not of equal Authority. A Writing may be proved Authentick, an obscure unwritten Tradition cannot: and can any man think, that Christ would have one half of his Gospel written, the other half unwritten, if he intended to perfect the knowledge of Christians: for they cannot have so perfect a knowledge, because they cannot have so great certainty, of the unwritten, as they have of the written Gospel. Writing is the most certain Way to perpetuate Knowledge, and if Christ intended, that his Church in all Ages should have a perfect Rule of Faith, we must acknowledge the perfection of the written Rule. The truth is, I cannot but admire the great artifice of the Church of *Rome*, in preaching up the Obscurity and Imperfection of the Scriptures, for she has hereby put it into her own power, to make Christian Religion, what she pleases; for if the Scriptures be obscure, and she alone can infallibly interpret them; if the Scriptures be imperfect, and she alone can supply their defects by unwritten Traditions, it is plain, that Christian Religion must be, what she says it is, and it shall be, what her interest requires it to be. But whether this be consistent with our Saviour's design in publishing the Gospel, or whether it be the best way of improving the knowledge of Mankind, let any impartial man judge.

54. An Implicit Faith, or believing as the Church believes, without knowing what it is we believe, can be no Gospel-Doctrine, because this to be sure cannot be for the improvement of knowledge.

ledge. Some of the Roman Doctors think it sufficient, that a man believes as the Church believes, without an explicate knowledge of any thing they believe ; but the general opinion is, that a man must have an explicate belief of the *Apostles Creed*, but as for every thing else it suffices, if he believes as the Church believes, without knowing, what the faith of the Church is : that is, it is not necessary men should so much as know, what the new Articles of the *Trent Faith* are, if they believe the *Apostles Creed*, and resign up their Faith implicitly to the Church.

Now this is a plain confession, that all the Doctrines in dispute between us and the *Church of Rome*, are of no use, much less necessary to salvation ; for if they were, they would be as necessary to be known, and explicitly believed, as the *Apostles Creed* : and I cannot imagine, why we Hereticks, who believe the *Apostles Creed*, and understand it as orthodoxly as they, may not be saved without believing the new *Trent Creed* ; for if we need not know what it is, there seems to be no need of believing it ; for I always thought, that no man can, and therefore to be sure no man need, believe, what he does not know. So that it seems, we know and believe all things, the explicate knowledge, and belief of which, by their own confession, is necessary to salvation, except that one single Point of the Infallibility of the *Church of Rome* : believe but that, and ye need believe or know nothing more but the *Apostles Creed*, and yet go to Heaven as a good *Catholick* : which makes an implicate Faith in the *Church of Rome*, as necessary as Faith in Christ is.

But if the intent of the Gospel was to improve our Knowledge, then Christ never taught an implicate Faith, for that does not improve Knowledge : and if the Faith of the *Church of Rome*, excepting the *Apostles Creed*, which is the common Faith of all Christians, need not be known, then they are no Gospel-Doctrines, much less necessary Articles of Faith, for Christ taught nothing, but what he would have known ; and though the knowledge of all things, which Christ taught, is not equally necessary to salvation, yet it tends to the perfecting our knowledge,

ledge, and Christ taught nothing which a man need not know ; which I think is a reproach to meaner Masters, and much more to the eternal and incarnate Wisdom.

Secondly, The improvement and perfection of Humane Nature consists in true Holiness and Virtue, in a likeness and conformity to God, and a participation of the Divine Nature: and this is the great end of the Gospel to advance us to as perfect Holiness as is attainable in this life: Christ indeed has made expiation for our sins by his own Blood, but then this very Blood of Atonement does not only expiate the guilt of sin, but purges the Conscience from dead works, that we may serve the living God : for no Sacrifice, not of the Son of God himself, can reconcile an impenitent and unreformed Sinner to God, that is, can move God to love a Sinner , who still loves and continues in his sins; which an infinitely holy and pure being cannot do: Indeed the expiation of sin is but one part of the work of our Redemption; for a sinner cannot be saved, that is, cannot be advanced to immortal life in the Kingdom of Heaven, without being born again, without being renewed and sanctified by the holy Spirit, after the Image and likeness of God. For this new Nature is the only Principle of a new immortal life in us; an earthly sensual mind is no more capable of living in Heaven, than an earthly mortal body. In both senses *flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption.*

The Church of *Rome* indeed has taken great care about the first of these, and has found out more ways of expiating sin, and making satisfaction for it, than the Gospel ever taught us; whether they are so effectual to this purpose, let those look to it, who trust in them: but there is not that care taken to inculcate the necessity of internal holiness and purity of mind, and one would easily guess there can be no great need of it in that Church, which has so many easie ways of expiating sin.

The true character of Gospel-Doctrines is, a Doctrine according to Godliness, the principal design of which is to promote true goodness; all the Articles of the Christian Faith tend to this end, to lay great and irresistible obligations on us to abstain from

every sin, and to exercise our selves in every thing that is good, as we have ability and opportunity to do it: and therefore all Doctrines which secretly undermine a good life, and make it unnecessary for men to be truly and sincerely vertuous, can be no Gospel-Doctrines. That there are such Doctrines in the *Church of Rome*, has been abundantly proved by the late Learned and Reverend Bishop *Taylor* in his *Dissuasive from Popery*; which is so very useful a Book, that I had rather direct my Readers to it, than transcribe out of it: My design leads me to another method; for if I can prove that the Doctrines and Practices of the *Church of Rome* naturally tend to evacuate the force of the Gospel it self, to make men good and holy; every one will easily see that that can be no Gospel-Faith and Worship, which sets aside the Gospel it self.

The whole Doctrine of the Gospel either consists of the Rules of Holiness, or of the Motives and Instruments of it; for the Articles of the Christian Faith are all of them so many Motives to a good life: let us then consider how the Faith and Worship of the *Church of Rome* has made void the Gospel of our Saviour, as the *Pharisees* made void the Law of *Moses* by their Traditions.

I. Let us begin then with the Gospel-Rules of Holiness. It would be an endless thing here to take notice of the loose Determinations of their famed and approved *Casuits*, of their Doctrine of probable Opinions, of the direction of the intention, by which means the very Laws and Boundaries of Vertue and Vice are in a great measure quite altered; and it may be this would only make work for the *Representer*, and furnish out a fourth part of the *Papist Misrepresented*, if we venture to tell the World what has been the avowed Doctrines of their great Divines and *Casuits*. But whether such Definitions be the Doctrine of their Church or not, I am sure they are equally mischievous, if they be the Doctrines of their Confessors who have the immediate direction of mens Conscience. Those who have a mind to be satisfied in this matter, may find enough of it in the *Provincial Letters*, the *Jesuit Morals*, and Bishop *Taylor's Dissuasive*. It sufficiently answers my present design to take notice of some few plain things, which will admit of no dispute. I

I have already shewn what a great value the *Church of Rome* sets upon an external Righteousness, which is much more meritorious than a real and substantial Piety and Virtue. Now let any man judge whether this be not apt to corrupt mens notions of what is good; to perswade them that such external observances are much more pleasing to God, and therefore certainly much better in themselves, than true Gospel-Obedience, than Moral and Evangelical Vertues; for that which will merit of God the pardon of the greatest immoralities, and a great reward, that which supplies the want of true Vertue, which compensates for sin, and makes men great Saints, must needs be more pleasing to God, than Vertue it self is: and if men can believe this, all the Laws of Holiness signifie nothing, but to let men know, when they break them, that they may make satisfaction by some meritorious Superstitions.

Thus the Doctrine of venial sins, which are hardly any sins at all, to be sure how numerous soever they are, or how frequently soever repeated, cannot deserve eternal punishments, is apt to give men very slight thoughts of very great Evils: For very great Evils may come under the notion of venial sins, when they are the effects of Passion and Surprize, and the like. Indeed this very Doctrine of venial sins is so perplexed and undermined, that the Priest and the Penitent may serve themselves of it to good purpose: I am sure this distinction is apt to make men careless of what they think little faults, which are generally the seeds and dispositions to much greater; such as the sudden eruptions of Passion, some wanton thoughts, an *indecorum* and undecency in words and actions, and what men will please to call little venial sins, for there is no certain Rule to know them by: so that while this distinction lasts, men have an excuse at hand for a great many sins, which they need take no care of; they are not obliged to aim at those perfections of Vertue, which the Gospel requires; if they keep clear of mortal sins, they are safe, and that men may do, without any great attainments in Vertue; which does not look very like a Gospel-Doctrine, which gives us such admirable Laws, which requires such great circumspection

in our Lives, such a command over our Passions, such inoffensiveness in our Words and Actions, as no Institution in the World ever did before. Whatever corrupt mens Notions of Good and Evil, as External Superstitions, and the distinction between Venial and Mortal Sins is apt to do, is a contradiction to the design of the Gospel, to give us the plain Rules and Precepts of a perfect Vertue.

Secondly. Let us consider some of the principal Motives of the Gospel to a Holy Life, and see, whether the *Church of Rome* does not evacuate them also, and destroy their force and power.

Now 1. The Fundamental Motive of all, is the absolute necessity of a Holy Life; that *without holiness no man shall see God*, for no other Argument has any necessary force without this. But the absolute necessity of a holy life to please God, and to go to Heaven, is many ways overthrown by the *Church of Rome*, and nothing would more effectually overthrow the *Church of Rome*, than to re-establish this Doctrine of the absolute necessity of a good life. For were men once convinced of this, that there is no way to get to Heaven, but by being truly and sincerely good; they would keep their Money in their Pockets, and not sling it so lavishly away up Indulgencies, or Masses; they would stay at home, and not tire themselves with fruitless Pilgrimages, and prodigal Offerings at the Shrines of some powerful Saints, all external, troubleome and costly Superstitions would fall into contempt; good men would feel, that they need them not, and if bad men were convinced, that they would do them no good, there were an end of them, for the only use of them is to excuse men from the necessity of being good.

But this is most evident in their Doctrine about the Sacrament of Penance, that bare Contrition with the Absolution of the Priest, puts a man into a state of Salvation; I do not lay it upon Attrition, which is somewhat less than Contrition, though the *Council of Trent*, if I can understand plain words, makes that sufficient with the Absolution of the Priest; but because some men will unreasonably wrangle about this, I shall insist only on what

what is acknowledged by themselves, that Contrition, which is only a sorrow for sin, if we confess our sins to a Priest, and receive absolution, puts us into a state of Grace : now contrition, or sorrow for sin, is not a holy life, and therefore this Doctrine overthrows the necessity of a holy life, because men may be saved by the Sacrament of Penance without it, and then I know no necessity there is of mortifying their Lusts : for if they sin again, it is only repeating the same remedy, confessing their sins ; and being sorry for them, and receiving absolution, and they are restored to the favour of God, and to a state of salvation again. Nay, some of their Casuists tell us, that God has not commanded men to repent, but only at the time of death, and then contrition with absolution will secure their salvation, after a whole life spent in wickedness, without any other good action, but only sorrow for sin : and if men are not bound by the Laws of God so much as to be contrite for their sins, till they find themselves dying, and incapable of doing any good, all men must grant, that a holy life is not necessary to salvation.

2. More particularly. The love of God in giving his own Son to die for us, and the love of Christ in giving himself for us, are great Gospel Motives to Obedience and a Holy Life ; but these can only work upon ingenuous minds, who have already in some measure conquered the love of sin ; for where the love of sin prevails, it is too powerful for the love of God ; but the holiness and purity and inflexible justice of the Divine Nature is a very good argument, because it enforces the necessity of a holy life ; for a holy God cannot be reconciled to wicked Men ; will not forgive our sins, unless we repent of them, and reform them : which must engage all men, who hope for pardon and forgiveness from God, to forsake their sins, and reform their lives : but the force of this Argument is lost in the *Church of Rome* by the judicial absolution of the Priest : for they see daily the Priest does absolve them without forsaking their sins, and God must confirm the sentence of his Ministers, and therefore they are absolved, and need not fear, that God will not absolve them, when the Priest has ; which must either destroy all sense of God's essential

essential holiness and purity, and persuade them, that God can be reconciled to sinners, while they continue in their sins, or else, they must believe, that God has given power to his Priests, to absolve those, whom he could not have absolved himself: To be sure it is in vain to tell men, that God will not forgive sinners, while they continue in their sins, if they believe the judicial authority of the Priest to forgive sins; for they every day absolve men, who do not forsake their sins, and if their absolution be good, God must forgive them too; and thus the holiness and inflexible justice of God loses its force upon good Catholics to reform their lives; and therefore were there no other arguments against it, it is not likely that the judicial absolution of the Priest, as it is taught and practised in the *Church of Rome*, should be a Gospel-Doctrine.

3. The Death and Sacrifice of Christ is another Gospel-Motive to Holiness of Life; not only because he has now bought us with his own Blood, and therefore we must no longer live unto our selves, but to him, who died for us; but because his Blood is the Blood of the Covenant, and the efficacy of his Sacrifice extends no farther than the Gospel-Covenant, which teaches us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. That is, no man can be saved by the Blood of Christ, but those who obey the Gospel, which obliges all men, who hope to be saved by Christ, to the practise of an universal righteousness.

This the *Church of Rome* seems very sensible of, that none but sincere Penitents, and truly good men can be saved by the Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross; which gives no hope to Sinners, who do not repent of their sins and amend their lives; and therefore she has found out a great many other ways of expiating Sin, which give more comfort to Sinners. The Sacrifice of the Mass has a distinct virtue and merit from the Sacrifice upon the Cross; it is a propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead, to expiate especially the sins of those, for whom it is particularly offered; and thus those sins which are not expiated by the Death of Christ upon the Cross, are expiated by the Sacrifice of the

the Mass, and that by the bear *opus operatum*, by the offering this Sacrifice of the Mass itself, without any good motion in the person for whom it is offered: and thus the Sacrifice of the Mass destroys the virtue of Christ's Sacrifice upon the Cross, to oblige men to holiness of life; for though none but sincere and reformed Penitents are pardoned by the Sacrifice of the Cross, the Sacrifice of the Mass will expiate the sins of unreformed Sinners, and then there is no need to reform our lives. Thus I am sure all men understand it, or they would never put their confidence in the Mass-Sacrifice; for if it does no more for us than Christ's Death upon the Cross, it might be spared, for it gives no new comforts to impenitent Sinners.

They are very sensible, that holiness of life is necessary to intitle us to the Pardon and Forgiveness purchased by the Death of Christ; but then the Sacrifice of the Mass, Humane Penances, and Satisfactions, and Merits, and Indulgences, seem on purpose contrived to supply the place of Holiness of Life; for no body can imagine else what they are good for. Christ has by his Death upon the Cross, made a perfect Atonement for the sins of all true penitent and reformed Sinners; and therefore a true Penitent, who according to the terms of the Gospel, *denies all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*; needs no Expiation but the Death of Christ: Will they deny this? by no means! They grant, that all our sins are done away in Baptism, merely by the application of Christ's Death and Passion to us; and therefore the Death of Christ is a complete and perfect satisfaction for all sin, or else Baptism, which derives its whole virtue from the Death of Christ, could not wash away all sin: What use can there be then of the new propitiatory Sacrifice of the Mass, of humane Satisfactions, and Merits, and Indulgences? Truly none but this, that when our sins are expiated by the Death of Christ, and the pardon of all our sins applied to us in Baptism, the Gospel exacts a holy life from us, and therefore men forfeit the baptismal Pardon of their sins by the Blood of Christ, unless they either live very holy lives, or make some other satisfaction for their not doing so: And for this purpose the

the Sacrifice of the Mass, humane Penances, and Satisfactions serve. It will not be unuseful, nor unpleasant to draw a short Scheme of this whole matter, which will explain this great Mystery, and make it intelligible, which now appears to be nothing but nonsense and confusion.

Christ then has made a perfect Atonement and Expiation for sin; this is applied to us at Baptism, wherein all our sins are forgiven; and while we continue in this state of Grace, we cannot be eternally damned, though we may be punished for our sins, both in this World and Purgatory. But every mortal sin puts us out of the state of Grace, which we were in by Baptism, and till we be restored to the state of Grace again, we must be eternally damned, because we have no right to the Sacrifice and Expiation of Christ's Death: the only way in the *Church of Rome*, to restore us to this state of Grace, is by the Sacrament of Penance, and the Absolution of the Priest, which restores us to the same state which Baptism at first put us into, and therefore very well deserves to be thought a Sacrament: And thus we recover our interest in the Merits of Christ's Death, and therefore cannot be eternally damned for our sins; but still it is our duty to live well, for the Death of Christ does not excuse us from Holiness of Life, which is the condition of the Gospel; and therefore if we are in a state of Grace, and thereby secured from eternal damnation, yet if we live in sin we must be punished for it, unless we can find some other expiation for sin, than the Death of Christ upon the Cross, which still leaves us under the obligations of a holy life, and therefore cannot make such an Expiation for sin, as shall serve instead of a holy life: Now here comes in the Sacrifice of the Mass, Humane Penance, Satisfactions, Indulgencies;

For the sacrifice of the Mass, as I observed before, does not serve the same end, that the Sacrifice of the Cross does: the Sacrifice of the Mass is a propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead; But what sins is it a Propitiation for? For such sins for which men are to satisfy themselves; that is, for all sins the eternal punishment of which is remitted for the Sacrifice of the Cross. This is evident from their making the Sacrifice of the Mass

Mass a propitiatory Sacrifice for the dead; that is, for the Souls in Purgatory, who suffer there the temporal punishments of sin, when the eternal punishment is forgiven: the Souls in Hell are capable of no Expiation, and therefore an expiatory Sacrifice for the dead, can be only for the Souls in Purgatory, and that is for the temporal punishment of sin, for which the Sacrifice of the Cross is no Expiation; and the Mass is in no other sense made a Sacrifice for the living than for the dead; and therefore is not to expiate the eternal, but the temporal punishments of sin, as appears from hence, that the saying Masses, or hearing Masses, or purchasing Masses, is reckoned among those Penances men must do for the Expiation of their sins, and yet they can, by all they do, only expiate for the temporal punishment of sin; and therefore Masses for the living are only for the Expiation of those temporal punishments of sin, for which the Sacrifice of the Cross made no Expiation. And I shall be so civil at present, as not to inquire, how the Sacrifice of the Cross, and the Sacrifice of the Mass, which are the very same Sacrifice of the Natural Body and Blood of Christ, come to serve such very different ends: that when Christ was Sacrificed upon the Cross he expiated only for the eternal punishment of sin; when Sacrificed in the Mass, only for the temporal. I need add nothing to prove, that Humane Penances, Satisfactions, Merits, Indulgencies, are onely to expiate temporal punishment of sin, because it is universally acknowledged. Now if these temporal punishments be only in lieu of Holiness and Obedience which the Gospel requires to intitle us to the Expiation of Christ's Death upon the Cross, as I have already shown; then it is evident to a demonstration, that the *Church of Rome* has overthrown the Death and Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, consider'd as an argument of a holy life, by setting up the Sacrifice of the Mass, Humane Penances, Satisfactions, Merits, Indulgencies, instead of the Gospel terms of obedience and holiness of life.

4. The Intercession of Christ for us, at the right hand of God, is another powerful motive to Holiness of Life: It gives all the encouragement to true penitent Sinners, that can be desired;

For if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ 1 John 2.2.

the righteous, who is also a propitiation for our sins. But then Christ mediates only in vertue of his Blood, that is, only upon the terms and conditions of the Covenant of Grace which was sealed by his Blood ; that is, he mediates and intercedes only for true penitent sinners ; which obliges us, as we hope to be heard by God, when we pray in the Name of Christ, truly and heartily to repent of all our sins, and to live a new life.

This the *Church of Rome* also seems very sensible of, that Christ of his own accord will not intercede for impenitent and unreformed sinners ; that he who is the great Example and the great Preacher of Righteousness, will not espouse the Cause of incorrigible sinners, who are very desirous of pardon, but hate to be reformed ; and therefore they seem to think it as hopeless a thing to go immediately to a holy Jesus, as to appear before the Tribunal of a just and righteous God, without a powerful Advocate.

For this reason they have found out a great many other Advocates and Mediators a great deal more pitiful and compassionate than Christ is, who by their interest in him, or their great favour with God, may obtain that pardon which otherwise they could not hope for ; such as the *Virgin Mary*, who is the Mother of Christ, and therefore, as they presume, has as great interest in and authority over him, as a Mother has over her Son ; besides those vast numbers of meritorious Saints, whose Intercessions cannot but prevail for those sinners whose Cause they undertake.

And that this is the true reason of their Addresses to Saints and the *Virgin Mary*, though they will not speak out, is evident to any considering man : For will they say, that Christ, who became man for us, who suffered and died for us, who was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin ; who did and suffered all this on purpose that he might be a merciful and compassionate High Priest, and might give us the highest assurance of his tenderness and compassion for us. I say, can they suspect that such a High Priest will not undertake to plead our Cause, if we be such as according to the terms of the Gospel, it is his Office to interceed for ? No Christian dare say this, which is such a reproach to our common Saviour, who hath bought us with his

own Blood ; and therefore no Christian who thinks himself within the reach and compass of Christ's Intercession, can need or desire any other Advocate : but those who are conscious to themselves of so much wickedness, that they cannot hope the holy Jesus will intercede for them for their own sakes, have reason to procure some other Favourites to intercede for them with their Intercessor ; and to countenance the matter they must recommend it to the practice of all Christians, and more than so, make it Heresie to deny it. There is but one Argument I know of against this, that any man should be so stupid as to think that the Intercession of the Virgin *Mary*, or the most powerful Saints, can prevail with our Saviour to do that, which according to the Laws of his own Mediation, they know he cannot and will not do : and this I confess I cannot answer, but yet so it is. And thus the Intercession of Christ is made a very ineffectual Argument to make men good ; for though Christ will intercede for none but true Penitents, the *Church of Rome* has a great many other Advocates that will, or at least she perswades people that they will.

5. Another great Gospel-Motive to a holy life, is the hope of Heaven, and the fear of Hell. As for the hope of Heaven, that is no otherwise a Motive to holiness of life, but upon a supposition of the necessity of Holiness, that *without holiness no man shall see God* ; but this you have already heard, is overthrown by the *Church of Rome* : and if men may go to Heaven without holiness, I know no need of it for that purpose in this World.

But Hell is a very terrible thing, to be condemned to endless and eternal torments with the Devil and his Angels ; but then the Doctrine of Purgatory does mightily abate and take off this terror : for though Purgatory be a terrible place too, not cooler than Hell it self, yet it is not eternal ; and men, who are mightily in love with their sins, will venture temporal punishments, though somewhat of the longest, to enjoy their present satisfactions : especially considering how many easie ways there are for rich men to get out of Purgatory ; those who have money enough to buy Indulgences while they live, and Masses for their

Souls when they die, need not lie long there, if the Priests are not out in their reckoning : and yet it is so easie a thing for a good Catholick to get into Purgatory ; especially if he take care frequently to confesse himself, and receive absolution, or do not die so suddenly as to be surprized in any mortal sin, that Hell seems to be very little thought of, or feared in the *Church of Rome*. Now I desire no better Argument, that all these are not Gospel-Doctrines, than that they destroy the force of all those Arguments the Gospel uses to make men good ; that is, they are a direct contradiction to the Gospel of Christ.

6. I shall name but one Motive more, and that is the Exam-
 12 Heb. 1. ples of good men ; *To be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises ; that being incompassed with such a cloud of witnesses, we should lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race which is set before us.* Now this is a powerful Argument, because they were men as we are, subject to the same temptations and infirmities ; and therefore their Examples prove, that Holiness is a practicable thing ; that it is possible for men to conquer all the difficulties of Religion, and all the temptations in this life ; and many times in them we see the visible rewards of Vertue in great peace of mind, great assurances of the divine favour, great supports under all adversities, and such a triumphant death, as is a blessed presage of a glorious Resurrection.

But now in the *Church of Rome*, if there be any great and meritorious Saints, as they call them, their extraordinary Vertues are not so much for Imitation as for a stock of Merits. The more Saints they have, the less reason other men have to be Saints, if they have no mind to it, because there is a greater treasury of Merits in the Church to relieve those who have none of their own. The extraordinary Devotion of their Monasteries and Nunneries, (for so they would perswade the World, that there is nothing but Devotion there) is not for Imitation, and it is unreasonable it should, because no body sees it ; and it is impossible to imitate that recluse life, without turning the whole World into a Monastery : but these Religious Societies furnish
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the Church with a stock of Merits, out of which she grants Indulgencies to those, who are not very religious ; and it is plain, that if one man can merit for twenty, there is no need, there should be above one in twenty good. Herein indeed the Members of the *Church of Rome*, have the advantage of all other Churches, (especially if they enter themselves into any religious Confraternity, to partake in the Merits of the Society) that others can merit for them ; and then if we can share in the Merits of the Saints, we need not imitate them : a Church which has Saints to merit for them on Earth, and to intercede for them in Heaven, if she can but maintain and propagate a Race of such meriting Saints, (which is taken care of in the Institution and Encouragement of Monastick Orders and Fraternities) may be very indulgent to the rest of her Members, who do not like meriting themselves. So that the principal Motives of the Gospel to Holy Life, as appears in these Six Particulars, lose their force and efficacy in the *Church of Rome*, and certainly those cannot be Gospel-Doctrines, which destroy the great end of the Gospel to make men Good.

34y, Nor do the Gospel-means and Instruments of Holiness and Vertue escape better in the *Church of Rome* : as will appear in a very few words.

Reading and Meditating on the Holy Scriptures, is one excellent means of Grace, not only as it informs us of our Duty, but as it keeps a constant warm sense of it upon our Minds, which nothing can so effectually do, as a daily reading of the Scripture, which strikes the mind with a more sacred authority, than any Humane Discourses can do : but this is denied to the People of the *Church of Rome*, who are not allowed to read the Scriptures in the Vulgar Tongue, for fear of Heresie, which, it seems, is more plain and obvious in the Scripture than Catholick Doctrines : but they should also have considered, whether the danger of Heresie or Sin be the greater ; whether an orthodox faith on a good life be more valuable ; and if denying the people the use of the Bible be the way to keep them orthodox, I am sure it is not the way to make them good ; True Piety will lose more by this, than the Faith will get by it. Thus,

Thus constant and fervent Prayer, besides that supernatural grace and assistance it obtains for us, is an excellent moral instrument of holiness: for when men confess their sins to God with shame and sorrow, when with inflamed Devotions, they beg the assistances of the Divine Grace, when their souls are every day possessed with such a great sense awe and reverence for God, as he must have, who prays devoutly to him every day; I say, it is impossible such men should easily return to those sins, which they have so lately confessed, with such shame and confusion and bitter remorse; that those who so importunately beg the assistance of the Divine Grace, should not use their best endeavours to resist Temptations, and to improve in Grace and Vertue, which is a prophane mockery of God, to beg his assistance, that he will work in us, and with us, when we will not work: that those who have a constant sense and reverence of God, should do such things, as argue, that men have no fear of God before their eyes.

But this is all lost in the *Church of Rome*, where men are taught to Pray they know not what, and when men do not understand their Prayers, it is certain such Prayers cannot affect their minds, what other good soever *Latin* Prayers may do them; and thus one of the most powerful Instruments of Piety and Vertue is quite spoiled by Prayers in an unknown Tongue, which can no more improve their Vertue than their Knowledge.

Sorrow for Sin is an excellent Instrument of true Repentance, as that signifies the reformation of our Lives; for the natural effect of Sorrow is, not to do that again, which we are sorry for doing; but in the *Church of Rome*, this contrition, or sorrow for sin, serves only to qualify men for absolution, and that puts them into a state of grace, and then they may expiate their sins by Penances, but are under no necessity of forsaking them.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, besides those supernatural conveyances of Grace, which are annexed to it, by our Saviour's Institution, is a great Moral Instrument of Holiness; it representing to us the Love of our crucified Lord, the Merit and Desert of Sin, the Vertue of his Sacrifice to expiate our Sins, and

to purge our Consciences from Dead Works, and requiring the exercise of a great many Vertues; an abhorrence and detestation of our Sins, great and ardent Passions of Love and Devotion, firm Resolutions of Living to him, who Died for us, Forgiveness of Enemies, and an Universal Love and Charity to all Men, especially to the Members of the same Body with us; but in the *Church of Rome* this admirable Sacrament is turned into a dumb shew, which no body can be edified with, or into a Sacrifice for the living and the dead, which expiates Sin, and serves us instead of a Holy Life, as I observed above.

External Mortifications, and Severities to the Body, Fastings, Watchings, hard Lodging, &c. are very useful Instruments of Vertue, when they are intended to subdue the Flesh to the Spirit, and to wean our Minds from Sensual Enjoyments; but when they are intended to satisfy for our Sins, not to kill them; to punish our selves for our sins, that we may commit them more securely again, this is not a means to break vicious Habits, and to conquer the love of Sin, but only to conquer the fear of committing it.

This is enough to shew, how far Popery is from promoting the great design of the Gospel to improve and perfect Humane Nature and Holiness, and were there no other Argument against it, this were sufficient to me to prove, That it cannot be the Religion of the Gospel of Christ.

F I N I S.

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Imprimatur Liber cui Titulus,
*A Vindication of both Parts of the Preser-
vative against Popery, &c.*

July 4. 1688.

Gnil. Needham, R. R.
in Christo P. ac D.D.
Wilhelmo Archiepisc.
Cant. à Sacr. Domest.

A
VINDICATION
OF
Both PARTS
OF THE
Preservative
AGAINST
POPERY:
IN
ANSWER
TO THE
CAVILS
OF
LEWIS SABRAN, Jesuit.

By *WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D.D.*
Master of the Temple.

LONDON:

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TO THE
READER.

I Must confess, F. Lewis Sabran of the Society of Jesus, as he writes himself, has all the good Qualities belonging to his Order, excepting that Learning, which some of his Order have formerly had, but he is excusable for that, because of late; that has been the least of their care; but what they want in Learning, they make up in Confidence and Noise, which is a nearer conformity to the temper and spirit of their first Founder.

When I first saw his Sheet which he wrote against the First Part of the Preservative, I read it over, and laid it aside, as I thought it deserved; for I easily perceived, that he could not, or would not understand the plainest sense, and I saw nothing he had objected, which could impose upon the most unlearned Protestant; and I had no mind to engage with a Man, who has not Understanding enough to be Confuted: But the honest Footman thought fit to call him to an account, and I believe all impartial Men thought the Footman had the better of him, and yet the Jesuite had an honourable occasion to retreat, had his Wit served him to take it; for no Man would have expected that a Jesuite should have encountered a Footman; but here his Courage out-ran his Wit, as it often happens to Knights Errant in their bold Adventures.

I do intend as little as possibly I can to concern my self in the Dispute between the Jesuite and the Footman; the

B

Footman

To the READER.

Footman is able to Defend himself, and I e'en quake for the Jesuite for fear he should; but having a little leisure at present, I will spare some few hours to Vindicate the Preservative from this Jesuite's Cavils, for it will appear, that they are no better. As for those many good words he has bestowed on me, I take them for Complements on course; and to be plain with him, they are all lost upon me, for when I have Reason and Truth on my side, I am perfectly insensible of all the Sportings of Wit and Satyr, for there are no Jest's bite, but those that are true.

I do not intend to pursue this Jesuite in all his rambling Excursions, but shall keep close to my business, to Vindicate The Preservative, and that in as few words as I can; and this will come into a very narrow compass; for he has as little to say, as e'ever man had, if you keep him out of his Common-place Disputes; but if you suffer him to draw you into those beaten Roads, there is no end of him; for he has the Confidence of a Jesuite to repeat all the old baffled Arguments without blushing.

I confess, I am a little ashamed to meddle with so trifling an Adversary, and know not how I shall Answer it to the Ingenious Gentlemen of the Temple, to whom he so often Appeals against the Master, for spending my time so ill, unless his Character of a Jesuite will plead my excuse, which has been a formidable Name in former Ages: and if this will do, I have a very honourable and a very easy Task of it, an Adversary to encounter with the glorious Character of a Jesuite, but without the Sense of a Footman.

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
FIRST PART
OF THE
Preservative.

THE Charge against me is very formidable, Answer to that I advance such Principles in the *Preservative*, Preservative *as make void the use of Reason, Faith, P. 4* *Fathers, Councils, Scripture, and Moral Honesty*, if he had said less, he might sooner have been believed, or might have proved it better, when such wild and extravagant Accusations confute themselves; but *Jesuits* commonly spoil all by over-doing. Let us examine particulars.

SECT. I.

The Principles which are pretended to overthrow all right Use of Common Sense Vindicated.

THE first instance of this nature is, that *I Charge* Ibid. *Catholicks with this great Crime, that they will not allow the reading Heretical Books, and prove my Charge,*

A Vindication of the First Part of

because God not only allows, but requires it. The Paragraph he refers to is in p. 3. of the *Preservative*, in these words:

Men of weak judgments, and who are not skilled in the Laws of Disputation, may easily be imposed on by cunning Sceptifters, and such as lie in wait to deceive: the Church of Rome is very sensible of this, and therefore will not suffer her People to dispute their Religion, or to read Heretical Books: nay not so much as to look into the Bible it self: but though we allow all this to our People, as that which God not only allows but requires, &c. from hence he charges me with saying, that God not only allows but requires People to read *Heretical Books*. But the honest *Footman* plainly told him, what the meaning of *Heretical Books* was, that I spoke the Language of their Church, which calls all Books *Heretical* which are not of the *Roman* stamp: and this is all that I meant by it, as every honest Reader would see. Does not he use the very same way of speaking himself in the same Paragraph, when he retorts this Grime upon us, that we use all endeavours to binder our Flocks from bearing *Catholick Sermons, and reading Catholick Books*, for are any Christians so absurd as to forbid People to hear *Catholick Sermons*, and to read *Catholick Books*? No sure, not what they think *Catholick*: and why may not I use *Heretical*, as well as he use *Catholick* in the sense of the Church of *Rome*? by *Heretical* meaning such Books as the Church of *Rome* calls *Heretical*, as by *Catholick* he means such Books as the Church of *Rome* calls *Catholick*; for they are both equally *Heretical* and *Catholick*.

Answer p. 4.

But he complains in the *Preservative* Considered, p. 4. That he had asked three very material Questions, and the *Footman* had not vouchsafed an Answer to them,

them, and I believe the *Footman* was in the right, for they deserved none. But let us hear them, *This* (says he) *seemed to me extravagant, not to say impious, and to all those who have inherited from St. Paul that Faith to which he exacts so firm and unwavering an adherency, that if an Angel from Heaven should teach us any thing in opposition to it, we ought not to mind him, or return him any other Answer than Anathema.* How can, said I, this positive certainty stand with an obligation of reading Heretical Books which oppose that Faith, to frame by them, and settle a judgment. But now, if these Heretical Books do not oppose that Faith, which was Preached by St. Paul, I hope, there was no need of answering this Question; and if the Catholick Books do, I would desire him to Answer the Question; and if there be a Dispute depending, which of them contradicts St. Paul's Doctrine, I would desire him to tell me, How we shall know, which of them does it, without examining them? When we know these Books, which contradict St Paul's Doctrine, we will reject them with an Anathema, and for that reason we reject the Council of *Trent*, whose Authority we think to be inferior to an Angels, and that shews, that we do not think rejecting and yet reading such Books to make void common Sense; for though we reject the Council of *Trent*, yet we read it, as they find to their cost.

His next Question (or else I cannot make three of them) is, *By what Text doth God deliver this Injunction?* viz, of reading Heretical Books; which in his Sense of Heretical Books is a very senseless Question; for no man pretends, that God commands us to read Books, which we know to be Heretical; though a man who is inquiring after Truth, must read such Books, as the several divided Sides of Christians may call Heretical.

But

A Vindication of the First Part of

But his killing Question is to come. *I asked further, How standing to the first Principles of Common Sense, a Church which declares all men bound to judge for themselves, could countenance Laws which exact of Dissenters, that they stand not to that their Judgment, but comply against it, and that constrain their liberty of judging by the dread of Excommunications, Sequestrations, Imprisonments, &c. which is to make it Death not to act against a strict Duty of Conscience, acknowledged by the Persecutors. to be such.*

But what is this to reading Heretical Books? Is there any Law in the Church of *England*, thus to punish men for reading Heretical Books? There is we know in the Church of *Rome*, where besides other Heretical Books, to have and to read the Bible in the vulgar Tongue without License, which is rarely granted, and ought not to be at all, brings a man in danger of the Inquisition, which one word signifies more than any man can tell, but he who has felt it, witness the late account of the Inquisition of *Goa*.

Well, but to allow a liberty of Judging, and not to suffer men to stand to their Judgment, is contrary to Common Sense: It is so, but who gives a liberty of Judging, and forbids men to stand to their own Judgment? I am sure, the Church of *England* accounts any man a Knave, who contradicts his own Judgment and Conscience. There is no Inquisition for mens private Opinions, no ransacking Consciences in the Church of *England*, as we know, where there is.

Yes! *We constrain this liberty of Judging by the dread of Excommunications, Sequestrations, Imprisonments, Exclusion from the chiefest Properties of free born Subjects, even by Hanging and Quartering; which is to make it Death not to act against a strict Duty of Conscience, acknowledged*

knowledge by the Persecutors to be such. It is a blessed time for these Jesuits, who like that no body should be able to Persecute but themselves, to rail at Persecution; but let that pass. It seems then it is contrary to Common Sense to allow a liberty of Judging, and to deny a liberty of Practice; for God, suppose, to allow men to choose their Religion, and to Damn them, if they choose wrong. That is to say, a Natural liberty of Judgment, and by the same reason, the Natural liberty of Will, is inconsistent with all Government in Church and State: If this were so, it would indeed make Persecution (as he calls it) in a free-judging Church very absurd, but it is very reconcileable to Common Sense, for a Church which denies this liberty of Judging, to Persecute too; and this justifies the Persecutions of the Church of *Rome*: Let Protestants here see, if such Jesuits could rule the Roast, what it will cost them to part with their liberty of Judging; they loose their Argument against Persecution: for an Infallible Church which will not suffer men to Judge, may with good Reason Persecute them, if they do: that all men, who like Liberty of Conscience, are concerned to oppose Popery, which it seems is the only Religion, that can make it reasonable to Persecute, nay, which makes it unreasonable not to Persecute, for it is as much against Common Sense for a Church, which denies a liberty of Judging to allow a liberty of Conscience, as for a Church to deny Liberty of Conscience, which allows a liberty of Judging. Thus far the *Preservative* is safe, and let his following Harangue against the liberty of Judging shift for it self, that is not my business at present.

His next Quarrel is, that (*Preser. p. 4; 5.*) Lad-
vise Protestants not to dispute with Papists, *till they*
dis-

Answer, p. 4. **disown Infallibility.** I own the charge, and repeat it again, that it is a ridiculous thing to dispute with Papists, till they renounce Infallibility, as that is opposed to a liberty of Judging; for so the whole Sentence runs: *Here then let our Protestant fix his Foot, and not stir an inch, till they disown Infallibility, and confess, that every man must Judge for himself in Matters of Religion, according to the Proofs, that are offered to him.* This the Jesuit either designedly concealed, or did not understand, though it is the whole design of that Discourse: For the plain state of the Case is this. The Church of Rome pretends to be Infallible, and upon this pretence she requires us to submit to her Authority, and to receive all the Doctrines she teaches upon her bare Word, without Examination; for we must not Judge for our selves, but learn from an Infallible Church: Now I say, it is a ridiculous thing for such men to pretend to Dispute with us about Religion, when they will not allow that we can judge what is true or false, for it is to no purpose to Dispute, unless we can Judge; and therefore a Protestant before he Disputes with them, ought to exact this Confession from them, that every man must Judge for himself, and ought not to be over-ruled by the pretended Infallible Authority of the Church against his own Sense and Reason; and this is to make them disown Infallibility, as far as that is Matter of Controversie between us and the Church of Rome, to disown Infallibility as that is opposed to a liberty of Judging. If it be absurd to Dispute with a man, who denies me a liberty of Judging, then I must make him allow me this liberty before I Dispute, and then he must disown the over-ruling Authority of an Infallible Judge, which is a contradiction to such a Liberty.

By

By this time, I suppose, he sees to what little purpose his Objections are ; that to require such a disowning of Infallibility, *is to say, 'Tis impossible to convince a man that in Reason, he ought to submit his Judgment to any other, though Infallible :* No Sir ! but 'tis to say, that I cannot make use of my Reason in any thing, till I am delivered from the Usurping Authority of such an Infallible Judge, who will not suffer me to use my Reason, or to Judge for my self : *It does not make void the use of Common Sense and Reason, when it should lead us to submit to any just Authority ;* but to submit to such an unjust Authority, makes void the use of Common Sense and Reason, because he will not allow us to use our Reason. The *Jews* had no Reason, as he pretends to reject *St. Paul's* Disputation, till he had renounced Infallibility, because he never urged his own Infallibility, as the sole Reason of their Faith, and to debar them from a liberty of Judging, as the Church of *Rome* does ; if he had, it had been as vain a thing for the *Jews* to have Disputed with *St. Paul*, as it is for Protestants to Dispute with Papists.

His next Exception is against those Words, (*Pres. p. 6.*) *What difference is there betwixt mens using their private Judgments to turn Papists, or to turn Protestants ?* To this he answers, *The same as betwixt two sick men, the one whereof chooses to put himself in an able Doctors hands, whom he knows to have an infallible Remedy, (which none but Mountebanks ever had yet) whilst the other chooses his own Simples, and makes his own Medicines.*

The case is this ; I was giving a reason, why Papists, who have any modesty should not dispute with Protestants, because *it is an appeal to every man's private judgment : if ever they make Converts, they must be beholden to every man's private judgment for it, for I think*

*men cannot change their opinions, without exercising a private judgment about it; and I suppose when they dispute with men to make them Papists, they intend to convert them by their own private judgments: now what difference is there between mens using their private judgments to turn Papists or to turn Protestants? one indeed may be false, and the other true, but private judgment is private judgment still; and if it be so great a fault for men to use their private judgments, it is as great a fault in a Papist, as it is in a Protestant. So that all that I said is, that there is no difference with respect to mens using their private judgment, whether they use their private judgment to turn Papists, or to turn Protestants, for both is but private judgment; and to confute this, he tells us, that there is a great difference between turning Papist, and turning Protestant, which I granted there was; but is nothing to the present Argument. I say, there is no difference as to the principle or cause of their change, when the change of both is owing to private judgment, and he learnedly proves, that the change itself is different, as widely different, as Papist and Protestant differ. But though the Footman had plainly told him this, the Jesuite had not wit to understand it, and therefore (*Preservative Confid.* p. 11.) adds, *is there no difference then betwixt one, who follows his fancy in chusing his way, and him who chuses a good guide, and follows him, because they both chuse? do both equally rely on their fancy?* I grant, there is a difference between these two, as there is between a Protestant and a Papist; but when the dispute is, whether they shall follow their own reason and judgment, or give up themselves to follow a Guide with a blind and implicate faith, and every man must determine this by his own private judgment, which is
the*

the case I proposed, which way so ever they determine this question, whether to follow their own reason, or to follow a Guide, in this point, they both equally rely on their own private reason, and judgment, or as he calls it, fancy.

In the next place he says, *I take the Catholicks part, Answer, p. 4. and tho' faintly, yet speak well in so clear a cause. The intention of those Disputes is only to lead you to the infallible Church, and set you upon a Rock, and then it is very natural to renounce your own judgment, when you have an infallible Guide. This I do alledge as the most plausible pretence to justify Papists in disputing with Protestants, that the end of it is to lead us to an infallible Church. That our own judgment must bring Preserv. p. 9. us to the infallible Guide, but when we have found him, we have no farther use for our own judgment.*

I offered two Answers to this, neither of which he durst meddle with, but nibbles at a Passage in each.

The 1. he thus represents, *they cannot with any sense dispute with us about the particular Articles of Faith, because the sense given of Scripture and Fathers takes its Authority from the Church understanding it so.*

But my Answer was this; That if Disputes be only to lead us to the infallible Church, then it puts an end to all the particular Disputes of Religion between us and the Church of Rome: *We may dispute on about an infallible Judge, but they cannot with any sense dispute with us, about the particular Articles of Faith, such as Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the Mass, &c. for these are to be learnt only from the Church, and cannot be proved by Scripture or Fathers without the Authority of the Church. Which is a demonstration if Faith must be resolved into the infallible Authority of the Church, for then no Arguments are a sufficient foundation for*

A Vindication of the First Part of

Faith without the Authority of the Church, or if they be, there is no necessity of resolving our Faith into Church Authority, because we have a good foundation for Faith without it.

*Answer to
Prof. P. 4.*

He answers, *This is false. The sense (of Scripture) takes its authority from God, who spoke that Word, though we are certain, that we have the true sense of that Word, because we receive it from the Church, which is protected and guided in delivering us both the letter and sense, by the infallible Spirit of God, that is to abide with her for ever, according to Christ's promise, John 14. 16.*

This is a choice Paragraph. The Question between us is, Whether they can by Scripture convince a man, who does not yet believe the infallible Authority of the Church, as we Protestants do not, that their Doctrines of Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Worship of Images, &c. are true Gospel-Doctrines: This I say they cannot, if they be true to their own Doctrine, that we cannot be certain, what the true sense of Scripture is, without the infallible Authority of the Church of *Rome*. For a man cannot be convinced by Scripture, till he be sure, what the true sense of Scripture is, and if we cannot be sure of this without relying on the Authority of the Church in expounding Scripture, then a Protestant, who disowns such an Authority, can never be sure, what the true sense of Scripture is, and therefore cannot be convinced by Scripture-Proofs, which shews how absurd it is for a Papist, who professes to believe all this, to attempt to persuade a Protestant who rejects the Authority of their Church, of the truth of Popish Doctrines from Scripture: either he thinks these Doctrines so plainly contained in Scripture, that a man, who rejects the Authority of the Church, may be forced to acknow-

acknowledge, that they are in Scripture, and then he must reject the necessity of Church-Authority for the understanding of Scripture, which is to yield up a very concerning point to Protestants; or else he must confess, that he does very foolishly or knavishly in urging Scripture-Proofs to a man, who rejects the Authority of their Church, without which he knows there are no Scripture-Proofs of any Authority.

But this, which was the true state of the Controversie, the Jesuite takes no notice of; all that he says is this: That the sense of Scripture takes its Authority from God, that is, is ultimately resolved into God's Authority, who intended such a sense in it, but as to Catholicks, (for such he must mean) their certainty of the sense of Scripture is resolved immediately into the Authority of the Church, which is guided in expounding Scripture by an infallible Spirit: Now is not this the very same, that I said, that all Scripture-Proofs must be resolved into the Authority of the Church, and are not good without it, as it is impossible they should be, if we cannot certainly know, what the true sense of Scripture is, but from the Exposition of the Church. And yet if the Church of *Rome* be no more infallible in delivering the sense of Scripture, than in delivering the letter of it, there is no great encouragement to rely on her infallibility: as is evident from the many Corruptions of their Vulgar Latine, which one Pope corrected after another, and yet it is not corrected still; that it was a little over-sight in this Jesuite, (though possibly he knew nothing of the matter) to make the Church equally infallible in delivering the letter and the sense of Scripture.

But to do him right, he seems to offer at something of sense in his dispute between *John and William*, which

A Vindication of the First Part of

is the right way to a place. For, says he, *is John disabled from convincing William of his mistake by reasons, because he bath with him a Guide who certainly knows the way, and that he himself would certainly pass by those reasons, if his Guide assured him, that he applied them ill and wrongly to that way.* This has something of argument in it, and therefore shall be considered, and I am glad to meet with any thing, that deserves to be considered.

The sum of his Argument (which I shall represent fairly for him, because he has not shewn it to the best advantage) is this. That Roman-Catholicks have two ways of finding out the sense of Scripture, either by the use of Reason, or by the Expositions of an infallible Guide: but that Reason must be subordinate to the Guide, and if Reason dictates one sense of Scripture, and the Church teaches another, Reason must submit, and a true Catholick must embrace the sense of the Church, though it be against his Reason; but yet if Reason, and his Guide be both of a side, and he can prove by Reason, that to be the true sense of Scripture, which the Church gives of it, he may then wave the Authority of the Church, when he disputes with those, who reject such Authority, and argue from the reasons of things, and the natural interpretation of Scripture it self. As *John* may convince *William*, who rejects the infallibility of *John's* Guide, which is the true way by plain reason; while his reason is not contradicted by his Guide: and if our Jesuite can make more of this Argument himself, let him. I am sure he has spoiled it by repeating it in his *Preserv. Consider. p. 111*. *John is not disabled of convincing William of his mistake, because he receives the reasons he uses from an infallible Guide.* Where he has set it upon another bottom, and
a very

a very silly one for his purpose: for if the force of his Reasons be resolved into the Authority of an infallible Guide, it is all lost to him, who disowns the infallibility of the Guide: or if he means, that *John* is taught such Reasons by an infallible Guide, as are able by their own evidence to convince *William* without any regard to the infallibility of the Guide, we desire no more than to see such Reasons, and to be left to judge for our selves; but this ends in a Protestant Resolution of Faith, for every man to judge for himself according to the evidence of Reason, which in it self is neither more nor less evident, for being proposed or learnt from a fallible or infallible Guide. And yet by what follows, he can mean no more, but that the Authority of an infallible Judge must over-rule every Man's private Reason; for *he appeals to the learned Gentlemen of the Temple, hoping they will joyn with him maintaining against their Master, that all the Judges of the Land may very reasonably convince by Law an impertinent Party, though he should oppose, that they may not do it, because their interpretation of the Law is to deliver the true sense of it.* Which is glorious Nonsense, that all the Judges of the Land can convince a man, who is not convinced, but declares still, that they have not given the true sense of the Law. In all Civil Causes there must be a final judgment; and every private man must submit to the decision of Authority, whether his own reason be satisfied or not; but it is not so in matters of Religion; in which no man at the peril of his Soul must be over-ruled by any Authority, till he be first convinced. So that the Jesuite had said a good thing by chance, but for want of understanding it, had lost it again; and any man may see, that I could as easily have lost it, as he, had I a mind to it; but

but I will not part with it without an Answer, because it is the most plausible thing, that can be said, and possibly other men may understand it, who can't answer it, though he don't.

His Argument then as first proposed is this, That they allow of Reason in expounding Scripture, so long as they do not contradict the Sense and Exposition of the Church; and therefore they may dispute with Hereticks from Scripture, without concerning the Authority of the Church in the dispute. Now in answer to this, there are some material Questions to be asked. As,

1. Whether they can dispute with Protestants by Scripture-Arguments without allowing them to judge of the sense of Scripture by their own private Reason? and whether this be agreeable to the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, that every man may judge of the sense of Scripture by his own private Reason?

2. Whether the Scripture be so plain and perspicuous, especially in the Doctrines in dispute between us and the Church of *Rome*, that every honest impartial Inquirer may find the true sense of them without an infallible Interpreter? if they be, I think, they never ought to talk of the obscurity of Scripture, nor the necessity of an infallible Judge more; if they be not, and if they know, that they are not, then they know before hand, that the evidence of Scripture alone is not sufficient to convince a Protestant, who rejects an infallible Judge, and then it is a senseless thing for them to attempt the proof of such Doctrines by Scripture. Good Catholicks are satisfied with the Authority of the Church, and Hereticks who reject such an infallible Authority, cannot be confuted and convinced by meer Scripture.

3. I ask again, Whether the evidence of Reason in expounding Scripture be a sufficient Foundation for a Divine Faith? if it be, then Protestants, who disown an Infallible Judge, may have a true Divine Faith without the Infallibility of the Church, and then we may be true Believers without being *Roman-Catholicks*; and I should be glad to hear that out of the mouth of a *Jesuite*, for there is good use to be made of such a confession: if Scripture as expounded by Reason without an Infallible Judge is not a sufficient Foundation for a Divine Faith, then to what end does their disputing with Protestants from Scripture serve, if this cannot make them true Believers?

4. I ask once more, Whether the belief of the Scriptures themselves must not be resolved into the Authority of the Church? whether any man can believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God without it? if they cannot (and I would be glad to hear the *Jesuite* say they can) then I am sure the Scripture is no proof of any thing without the Churches Authority, and it is an absurd thing for those who think so to dispute from Scripture against those who deny the Authority of the Church.

From hence I think, it evidently appears, that the Authority of the Scriptures, and the Authority of the Church, are not two distinct Arguments in the Church of *Rome*, for then I grant, they might use either way of proof, and dispute from Scripture against those, who deny the Authority of the Church; but if the Authority of the Scripture as to us is resolved into the Authority of the Church, then the Scripture alone is no Argument, but the Authority of the Church is all. Wherefore do you believe the Scripture? Because the Church tells me it is the Word of God; Wherefore do you believe this to be the sense of Scripture? Because the Church so expounds it: Is not this the true Resolution of the *Roman* Faith? Is this Misrepresenting too? But if it be the truth, does not every

man see, that as to us the Scripture has no Authority, no sense, but from the Church, and therefore can prove nothing separated from the Authority of the Church.

If they allow of any Proofs from Scripture separated from the Authority of the Church, then whether they will or no, they must allow of the Protestant Resolution of Faith; that is, to resolve my Faith into the Authority of the Scriptures, as expounded with the best reason and judgment I have, in the careful use of all such means, as are necessary for the understanding that Holy Book: now if they will allow this to be a good Resolution of Faith, we will allow of all their Scripture-proofs, and give them leave to make us Converts to the Church of *Rome* by Scripture, if they can: but if they do allow of this, then we Protestants are in a very good way already as to the Resolution of our Faith, and so that Controversie is at an end; and if they will not allow this, then they confess, that Scripture-proofs of themselves are not good, for if they were, we might certainly resolve our Faith as Protestants do, immediately into the Authority of Scripture.

And thus much for *John* and *William* and the Infalible Guide; if *John* has any Reasons independent on the Authority of his Guide, he may then try his skill upon *William*, who rejects his Guide, but if all his other Reasons are resolved into the Authority of his Guide, and are no good Reasons without it, then he may spare his Reasons till he has made *William* submit to his Guide. And this is the case between the Scripture and the Church, in the Church of *Rome*: the Scripture wholly depends both for its Authority and Interpretation on the Authority of the Church, and therefore can signifie nothing and prove nothing, but what the Church makes it signifie and prove. The Scriptures may be supposed to be the Word of God, and to have some sense antecedent to the Churches Authority, but no man can know this without the Church, and therefore

fore as to us both the Authority and Interpretation of the Scripture depends upon the Authority of the Church, and is no Argument, to prove any thing by itself.

But I cannot pass on without taking notice of a pleasant Answer the *Jesuite* gives to a very substantial Argument of the *Footman*, To prove that at least some Doctrines of the Church of *Rome* by their own confession, cannot be proved by Scripture without the Authority of the Church, he shews that *Petrus de Alliaco*, *Scotus*, and *Tonstal* do confess, that Transubstantiation is not founded upon any necessary Scripture-proofs, but on the Authority of the Church, for the Scripture might, and that very reasonably too, be expounded to another sense, had not the Church determined otherwise. Now what does the *Jesuite* say to this? 1. He prevericates like a *Jesuite* in repeating the Argument; *That the Words of Scripture brought in proof of Transubstantiation might be taken in a different sense from that which the Catholick Church hath ever received and delivered; and that had not the Church ever taught that sense, one might believe otherwise, for all the letter of Scripture: for the Authōrs alledged by the Footman do not say, as the Jesuite makes them, that the Catholick Church hath ever received and delivered that sense of Transubstantiation, which the Church of Rome now teaches; but Tonstal expressly declares the contrary in the words there cited, That it was free for all men, till the Council of Lateran to follow their own conjectures as concerning the manner of the Presence.* Which supposes, that this Doctrine was never determined by the Church till the Council of *Lateran*, and therefore not ever received, and delivered, and taught by the *Catholick Church*. 2. In a Parenthesis he adds, *how truly* (this is said of the *Catholick Divines*, that they did affirm this) *it belongs not to my present purpose: very truly said; it is not to his purpose, but very much against it: but if he means, that he was not concerned to know, whether these*

these passages are truly cited from these Authors, it seems he is not concerned to defend his Argument, for that is very much concerned in it, it is a plain confession he had nothing to say, and therefore would not be concerned about it : and will our Learned Jesuite confess, that he is so ignorant as not to know that this was said by *Petrus de Alliaco*, *Scotus*, and *Tanhal* ? or will he so easily give up such men as these, and let the ingenious Footman run away with them and his Argument together.

3. He answers, *let it be so ; but what follows here ? but the necessity of an unerring Interpreter ?* What follows ? why it follows, that they cannot prove Transubstantiation from Scripture without the Authority of the Church, and consequently that it is not Scripture but their Church they rely on for the proof of their Doctrines, which is the thing the Footman intended to prove by it, and has done it effectually : but how an *unerring Interpreter* follows from hence, I cannot see, unless it be to prove that to be in Scripture, which the most searching and inquisitive men cannot find there : and this indeed is the true use of an *unerring Interpreter* in the Church of Rome, to impose upon mens Faith to believe that to be in Scripture, which no man can see there ; for what men can see there, one would think they might believe to be there, without an *unerring Interpreter*. As for what he adds, that the *Arians* gave as natural a sense of 1 John 5. 7, 8. as the Catholics did, is to be answered at present only with abhorrence and detestation. But to proceed.

*Preservative,
Part II p. 11.*

In the next place, to shew them, how absurd it is to dispute even about an infallible Judge, I direct our Protestant to ask them, *Whether the belief of an Infallible Judge must be resolved into every man's private judgment ? Whether it be not necessary to believe this with a Divine Faith ? And whether there can be any Divine Faith without an Infallible Judge ?* To this the Jesuite answers (*Ans. p. 4*) *There*

There can be no Divine Faith without a Divine Revelation, nor a prudent one without a Moral Evidence in the Motives of Credibility, on which may be grounded the evident obligation to accept it. This he calls a Moral Infallibility, and shews by what steps, it may fasten on God's Veracity, and with a submission not capable of any doubt, embrace the revealed Truth. Now all this amounts to no more than Protestant certainty, void of alldoubt, which the Church of Rome would never yet allow to be a Divine and Infallible Faith. But what is this to my Question? Which was not, Whether a Divine Faith required a Divine Revelation, but whether there can be any Divine Faith without an Infallible Judge? which it seems, he durst not own, nor say one word to. And yet here lay the force of the Argument, as I told him in the same place, If we must believe the Infallibility of the Pope or Church of Rome, with an infallible Faith, there is an end of Disputing; for no Reasons or Arguments, not the Authority of the Scripture itself (which I hope he means by his Divine Revelation) without an infallible Judge, can beget an Infallible Faith, according to the Roman Doctors. For this Reason they charge the Protestant Faith with uncertainty, and will not allow it to be a Divine, but Humane Faith, though it is built upon the firmest Reasons, the best Authority, and the most express Scripture, that can be had for any thing; but because we do not pretend to rely upon the authority of a living infallible judge, forsooth, our Faith is uncertain, humane, and fallible. This he knew to be true, and yet knew, that he could not build the belief of an Infallible Judge upon the authority of an Infallible Judge, unless he could find one Infallible Judge to give testimony to the Infallibility of another, and a third to give testimony to the second, and thus to dance round in a circle of Infallibility, without finding any beginning or end; and therefore he slips this pretence of an Infallible Judge, and would found a Divine Faith upon revelation,

A Vindication of the First Part of

velation, or prudential motives of credibility, which indeed is to quit Infallibility, and to take up with a Protestant moral certainty, or *moral infallibility* as he calls it, that he may retain the name at least, when the thing is lost.

Nay, he gives a substantial Reason against an Infallible Faith of the Churches Infallibility. For *if the Infallibility of the Church were more than Morally Evident, it were impossible, that any Hereſie ſhould be;* the wiſeſt word; that he has ſaid yet, but I ſhall make him repent of ſaying it, before I have done; for this is an evident demonstration againſt Infallibility.

He ſays, we can have no more than a *Moral Evidence for the Infallibility of the Church*; and if this be true, and our Faith be founded upon the Authority of the Church, then we can have no more than a Moral Evidence for the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, or any Article of it: for as I argued in that very place. *Though the Judge be Infallible, if I be not infallibly aſſured of this, (if I have only a Moral Evidence of his Infallibility.) I can never arrive to Infallibility in any thing, (or can never get higher than a Moral Certainty) for I can never be more certain, that his Determinations are Infallible, then I am, that he himſelf is Infallible, and if I have but a moral aſſurance of this, I can be but morally aſſured of the reſt, for the Building cannot be more firm than the Foundation is; and thus there is an end to all the Roman Pretences to Infallibility.* Though he ſlip't this at firſt Reading, I hope he may judge it worth Answering upon ſecond Thoughts.

But how he will get rid of his own Reason, I cannot gueſs, *if the Infallibility of the Church were more than Morally Evident, it were impossible, that any Hereſie ſhould be;* by which he either means, that *de facto* the Being of Hereſies in the World is a ſenſible Argument, that there is no Infallible aſſurance of the Infallibility of the Church; for an Infallible Proof cannot be reſiſted, and then all the
World

World must believe the Churches Infallibility, and give up themselves to the Directions of the Church, and then there could be no Heresies: or else his meaning is, that since there must be Heresies in the World, as the Apostle tells us, therefore God has given us no more than a Moral Evidence of the Infallibility of the Church; because an Infallible assurance of this would have prevented all Heresies, which God, it seems, for very wise Reasons, did not intend thus irresistibly to prevent.

Now rightly to understand this Matter, I would desire to know why they say God has bestowed Infallibility on the Church? Was it not to prevent Heresies and Schisms? Is not this the Popish Objection against the Protestant Resolution of Faith, that for want of an Infallible Guide men fall into Errors and Heresies, and divide and disturb the Peace of the Church with Schisms? Is not this the great Reason they urge for the necessity of an Infallible Guide to prevent all Heresies and Schisms? and yet now it seems, there must be no more than a Moral Evidence for the Infallibility of the Church, that there may be Heresies: How often have they been told by Protestant Divines, that if God intend an Infallible Judge to prevent all Heresies, the Being of an Infallible Judge ought to be as evident and demonstrable, as that there is a Sun in the Heavens, that all men might see him, and believe him: and now they tell us, This Infallible Judge must not be thus Evident, that men might not know him, that there may be room for Heresies to creep into the World: Now methinks it is pretty odd, that there should be an Infallible Judge to keep Heresies out of the Church, and that the Being of this Judge should be no more than Morally Evident, that Heresies may creep into the Church. It seems the Romish Resolution of Faith leaves as great Scope for Heresies to come into the Church, as the Protestants does, and therefore from henceforward, all the
Argu-

A Vindication of the First Part of

*Arguments for Infallibility from the necessity of keeping Heresies out of the Church, are given up; and they must never more object against the Protestant Rule of Faith, that by this means Heresies get into the Church. His Argument, I confess, concludes fully against any Infallible Certainty of an Infallible Judge; and the reason is no the full as good against an Infallible Judge, as against an Infallible way of knowing, that there is one. And now since I cannot be Infallibly assured of this Infallible Judge, I will trouble my head no further about him, and therefore leave his *Preservative Considered*, p. 13, &c. to any Footman that pleases to answer it.*

*Answer to
Preser. p. 5.*

His next Objection is much of the same nature. That Protestants cannot reasonably be disputed into Popery, as that signifies, *resolving our Faith into the infallible Authority of the Church to believe whatever the Church believes, and for no other reason, but because the Church teaches it*, and the reason, whereby I proved it, is, *because no Arguments or Disputations can give me an infallible certainty of the infallibility of the Church.* And this he has just now granted, that we cannot have an infallible certainty, but only a moral evidence for the infallibility of the Church, and if there can be no more than a moral evidence for this, then no Arguments can give us an infallible certainty of it, because this cannot be had. And what has he to say now? a very shrewd Objection I assure you, and it is this: *We saw Dr. Sherlock just now pleading for the Jews against St. Paul, (that I have accounted for already) now he reasons against Christ our God, blessed for ever more. His words prove that Christ, who owned himself infallible, did imprudently to Preach or work Miracles; for since they could not give an infallible certainty, (an evident one he means by his whole Discourse) no prudent Jew, nor Gentile, could be disputed by him into Faith.* Those who corrected his first Paper for him, which they

they have done in several places, as being sensible the Footman had great advantage of his loose way of Writing, have made some Alterations here in the *Preservative Considered*, p. 24. *This Position proving, that Christ our Lord, who owned himself infallible, did imprudently to Preach or work Miracles, by which he exacted a certain firm Faith grounded upon his Infallibility in Teaching: for since his Preaching and Miracles did not give an evident infallible certainty of his Infallibility, (and such an evident one Dr. Sherlock must mean, for the certainty we have of a real Infallibility cannot be in reality fallible) no prudent Jew or Gentile could be disputed by Christ into Faith.* This is expressed with greater art and subtilty than the first, but however they palliate it, it is equally absurd and senseless. The Fallacy lies only in this, that by an *infallible certainty*, they will have me mean only a *certain firm faith*, or an *evident certainty*, whereas I plainly mean such an infallible certainty, as the Church of *Rome* opposes to the *certain firm faith*, and *evident certainty* of Protestants.

The Papists perpetually object against Protestants, that their Faith is uncertain; we assert, that our Faith is not uncertain; that we have all the *evident certainty*, that the thing is capable of: but this will not satisfy them, unless we can produce some such infallible certainty, as they pretend to have; and by this Argument they persuade men to forsake our Communion, and to go over to the Church of *Rome*, that they may have the certainty of Infallibility for their Faith: This I tell our Protestants, they cannot be disputed into, because no Reasons or Disputations can give them an infallible certainty of the Infallibility of the Church, and yet unless they can be infallibly assured of that, they are no nearer to Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, than in the Church of *England*: now had our Jesuite read this, as he ought to have done

before he answered it, had it been possible for him had he not been a Jesuite, to have said, that by *infallible*, I meant *evident*? for we Protestants pretend to *evident certainty*, and this we have, and *Jews and Gentiles* might have of **Christ's Preaching and Miracles**, and when I opposed this **Infallible Certainty to Protestant Certainty**, surely I meant as much more by it then *Evident* as Papists do, when notwithstanding all our Protestant Evidence, they charge us with the want of Infallibility. And yet for ought I can perceive now, they are contented to let Evident Certainty pass for Infallible, and the Corrector of *F. Sabran's Sheet* has given us a notable reason for it, for which Protestants are bound to thank him, for he has made them all infallible. *For the certainty we have of a real Infallibility cannot be in reality fallible.* That is to say, when the Object is infallibly true, our Faith or Assent to it, cannot be fallible: and thus before they can prove us Protestants to be fallible Creatures any more, they must prove, that what we believe, viz. the Holy Scriptures, and the Apostles Creed, are not infallibly true. Though I thought the Infallibility of Faith had not been owing to the Object of our Faith, but to the Evidence of it.

*Defence of
Pris. p. 7.*

This the Footman plainly saw, and therefore minds him of the difference between *True Certainty and Infallibility*. *Doth Dr. Sherlock say, that the Jews could not be disputed into Faith, unless that Faith were infallible? No; he leaves that to be talked of by you, who are the great Pretenders to it.* The Jesuite is very angry at the Reverend Licensor for this. *What do you own, that we only are to look on the Faith even as preached by Christ, to be necessarily infallible? Is it no part of your belief that you are any way concerned in, that that certain Faith which Christ exacted from the Jews, St. Paul from each Christian, must of necessity be infallible?* Fair and softly! we believe, whatever
Christ

Christ and St. Paul taught to be infallibly true, but we know, that a fallible Creature, as all private Christians at least are, cannot believe with an infallible Faith; that is, no man, who knows himself fallible, though he may be very certain of what he believes, can say he is infallible in his Faith, unless there be a Divine Promise, that he shall never err; for if he be not infallible, he can be infallible in nothing. Protestants believe Christ to be an infallible Teacher, and the Christian Faith to be infallibly true, and this they believe with all the firmness and certainty of assent; but this is not, what the Church of Rome used to call Infallibility, though the Jesuite (if it be not meer want of understanding in him) seems to be hammering out a new notion of Infallibility; but it is but a rude and imperfect Embryo yet, we shall see, what they will make of it in time.

And here I find my self obliged to look a little backwards, to see how he states the Churches Infallibility, for he mightily complains of Protestant Misrepresentations about it.

Preservat. Con- sider. p. 13.

Our Guide then, he tells us, is the Catholick Church, either diffusive in its whole extent, (that is, as it contains or signifies the whole number of Christians all the World over) or representative in its Head and Bishops, the Pope and a General Council. The Church diffusive, or the whole number of Christians on Earth, is most certainly the true notion of the Catholick Church on Earth; is that Church, to which, most of the Promises made to The Church in Scripture, are made; but how this Church diffusive should be our Guide, wants to be explained: if the Church diffusive, or the whole number of Christians, is the Guide, who is to be guided, unless the Guide is to be a Guide only to himself: However, I hope then every particular Christian will be allowed a private judgment of his own; for the Church diffusive will be a very strange Guide, if it cannot

A Vindication of the First Part of

use its own reason and judgment ; and how the whole, which consists of all particular Christians, should judge for itself, when no particular Christian must judge, is somewhat mysterious : that is, that all Christians must judge, and yet none must judge. But I will not dispute with him about this, but whenever he will collect the Votes of the Church diffusive, or of all the Christians in the World, I promise to subscribe to their Definitions

*A Discourse
concerning the
Nature and
Unity of the
Catholick
Church.*

The Representative Church, is the Head and Bishops, the Pope and a General Council. I thought, the Pope in Jesuits Divinity, had been the Church *virtual*, and a General Council the Church *representative*. But I have in a late Discourse proved, that the Pope is not the Head of the Catholick Church, nor a Council of Bishops the representative of it, and he may try his skill upon it, when he pleases.

Now it seems, the Church diffusive has the keeping of *the general faith of Christians, first received from Christ and his Apostles, and preserved by all Bishops in their respective Diocesses, and in the minds and actions of each faithful Believer in the whole Catholick Church.* Strange ! that our Jesuite should now at last turn a meer Blackloist, or Traditionary Divine. This general Faith of Christians he compares to *the common Laws of the Land*, to shew I suppose his skill in the Law, and make *the learned Gentlemen of the Temple* to pity or scorn The Master's ignorance : well let that be as it will, for I pretend to no skill in Laws, but as for this *general Faith of Christians*, whatever it be like, I would gladly learn from the Church diffusive, what it is ; for I matter nothing else, but the General Faith of Christians ; but how to learn this, he has not told us ; *it is preserved*, he says, *by all Bishops in their respective Diocesses, and in the minds and actions of each faithful Believer in the whole Catholick Church.*

Well

Well then, must we examine all Bishops and every particular Believer about this? this is impossible to be done: will any one Bishop, or any one particular Believer, (since every Bishop, and every particular Believer has it) suffice to tell us, what this general Faith of Christians is? is this an infallible Conveyance of the Faith to depend upon the Tradition of Bishops and Christian People? is there no faithful and authentick Record of this Faith, from whence we may learn, what Christ and his Apostles delivered to the Church? So one would think by this Jesuit's account, who takes no notice of the Holy Scriptures, as if the common Faith of Christians could not be learnt from them, but from the tradition of the Church diffusive.

Thus much for Common Law, but the Church has her Statute Laws too, and they are *the Decisions or Canons of General Councils, declaring and applying to particular Instances the Common Law and Belief of the Church*: but how does the Pope and a General Council, or the Church-representative, as he calls it, come to have the power of declaring and applying the common Faith of Christians, which is in the keeping of the Church diffusive, and therefore one would think, could be declared by none else? do the Pope and a General Council infallibly know the Sentiments and Opinions of all the Christian Bishops and People in the World? This they must do, or else they cannot declare the common Faith of Christians, unless they can infallibly declare, what they do not know: If their Authority be only to declare the common Faith of Christians, how shall we know, that they declare nothing but the common Faith of Christians? for if they do, their Decrees are not valid, for they declare that which is false.

This Jesuit has greatly intangled and perplexed the Cause by laying the whole stress upon *the declarative and*
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A Vindication of the First Part of

ing Power. Had he said, that the Pope and a **General Council** had Authority to declare what is the **Christian Faith**, and though they declared that to be the true Faith, which the Church diffusive never heard of before, yet after their decision, it must be received as the common Faith of Christians, though it had not been so formerly, there had been some sense in this, though no truth: but when he says the Church can only declare what is, and always has been the common Faith of Christians, if I can find by ancient Records, that what the Council declares to be the common Faith of Christians now, was either not known or condemned in former Ages; if I certainly know, that she declares that to be the Faith, which at the very time of the Council was so far from being the common Faith of Christians, that it was not the common Faith of the Council, but was contradicted by the wisest and best part of it; then I certainly know, that the Council has not declared the common Faith of Christians, and therefore that its Decrees are of no Authority.

But he proceeds. *We hold, that this general Faith received from the Apostles, and preserved in all the Members of the Catholick Church, explained upon occasion by the Church representative, is infallibly true, and this is all the Infallibility the Catholick Church pretends to.* And there is no Protestant but will own this Infallibility. That the Faith at first received from the Apostles, the same Faith, which was delivered by the Apostles, preserved in all the Members of the Catholick Church, and the same Faith explained upon occasion by the Church representative, so that it is evident after the explanation, that it is the same Faith still; I say, every Protestant will acknowledge, that this Faith is infallibly true; for we believe the Faith delivered by the Apostles to be infallibly true, and if it appears, that the same Faith is still taught by the Church, whether in or out of Council it matters not,

not, it must be infallibly true still. But yet there is a little difference between us and the Jesuit; He believes, and would have us believe, that the present Faith of the Church of Rome, viz. the Doctrine of the Council of Trent, is that Faith, which was received from the Apostles, preserved in all the Members of the Catholick Church, and only explained upon occasion by the Council of Trent, which was the Church representative; this we deny: this we know, this we can, and often have proved to be false. And I beseech you, what greater infallibility can any Church pretend to, than to have the World receive all her Decrees as infallibly true?

But they do not pretend, that either the whole Church, or any person, or persons in it, are held to possess any intrinsic Infallibility, which they own to be proper to God alone. Thank 'em for nothing, they do not believe, that the Church or Pope or Council are by nature infallible, for all the World would laugh at them, if they did. We do not say, (as he adds) that they cannot of themselves deceive us, but that God according to his Promise directing them by his infallible Spirit, it cannot possibly happen, that they should deceive us. The Modesty of a Jesuit! who claims no more Infallibility for the Pope and General Council, than the Apostles had, and wonders any man should grudge them this, since they do not pretend to an intrinsic Infallibility, not to be infallible by Nature, but only by Grace. Thus he adds, that they do not pretend to new Revelations and Lights, nor admit any new Article of Faith; though where a doubt arises the Church hath infallibly power to declare what hath been revealed by Christ to the Apostles, and preached by them, which perhaps some parts of the Church might have had a less clear understanding thereof; but this is done, not by making any new Article of Faith, but more clearly delivering what was ever believed by the Apostles, and all Catholicks from their time to this: That is to say, what

what ever the Church determines, though the Christian Church in former ages knew nothing of it, yet it must not be called a new Article of Faith, but a declaring what had been revealed by Christ to his Apostles, and preached by them, though the world had long since forgot it: whatever the Church determines to day, we must believe to have been the Faith of the Apostolick Age, though there are no other evidences nor symptomes of it, but because the Church which is infallible, says so. And this is all the Infallibility the Church pretends too! a very small matter to be denied her by Christians, it is only to believe whatever she says, without disputing or examining her Faith; nay to believe that to be the old Faith, which the most authentick Records of the Church prove to be new. I have thus stepped out of my way, to see what fine thing he had to say of the Churches Infallibility, which he promised a very favourable representation of; but it is all the old cant still, a little disguised by some ignorant blunders, or artificial Non-sense; as for his proofs of this Infallibility, I am not concerned with them at present, and after so many discourses on that Argument they need no answer.

Another Argument whereby I proved, that no man can be disputed into Popery, which denies us the use of our own Reason and Judgment in matters of Religion, was this, *Because it is impossible by Reason to prove, that men must not use their own Reason and Judgment in matters of Religion*: For to dispute is to appeal to Reason, and to dispute against the use of Reason in Religion, is to appeal to Reason against the use of Reason: in Answer to this he tells us, *That men must use their Reason to come to this knowledge, that God hath revealed what they believe*. Now I would desire no more but this to prove that we must use our Reason in matters of Religion: for no man at this day can know what is revealed without it. I do assert, and let him disprove me when he can, that since God has

has given us reason to judge of the truth or falshood of such things, as are knowable by the light of Nature, and a standing Rule of Faith and Manners in the writings of the Old and New Testament, for matters of Revelation, we must believe no Mans or Churches pretences to Infallibility, who either teaches any Doctrine, which plainly contradicts the light of Reason, or a standing revelation; and therefore we must judge of mens pretences to the Spirit, by the Doctrines they teach, and therefore must particularly judge of their Doctrines too: This is the fair state of the Controversie between us, and here I leave it, and let him take it up again, when he pleases.

And here he returns back to the *Conference between a sturdy Protestant and a new Convert*, which belonged to the former head, the design of which is to shew the new Convert, that by going over to the Church of Rome he has gained no more Infallibility, than a Protestant has, nay has lost some degrees of certainty, which he might have had before: for thus the Protestant tells him: *You rely on your own reason and judgment for the Infallibility of your Church, and consequently of all the Doctrines of it, and therefore your infallible Faith is as much resolved into your own fallible Judgment, as the Protestant Faith is: So that the difference between us is not, that your Faith is infallible, and ours fallible, for they are both alike, call it what you will, fallible or infallible----- We have more rational certainty than you have, and you have no more infallible certainty than we. You think you are reasonably assured your Church is infallible, and then you take up your Religion upon trust from your Church, without, and many times against Sense and Reason, according as it happens. So that you have only a general assurance of the Infallibility of your Church, and that no greater than Protestants pretend to in other cases, viz. the certainty of Reason and Argument, but have not so much as a rational assurance of the truth of your particular Doctrines, that if you are mi-*

A Vindication of the First Part of

staken about the Infallibility of your Church, you must be miserably mistaken about every thing else, which you have no other evidence for. But now we are in general assured; that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and in particular assured, that the Faith which we profess, is agreeable to Scripture, or expressly contained in it, and does not contradict either Sense or Reason, nor any other principle of Knowledge: so that we have as much assurance of every Article of our Faith, as you have of the Infallibility of your Church, and therefore at least have double and triple the assurance that you have.

I have repeated this at large, that the Reader might see what the dispute is, and indeed the very repetition of it is a sufficient justification, for it carries its own evidence along with it. Now as to what I said, that *we are in general assured, that the Scriptures are the Word of God.* To this he answers, *The conclusion would be this, Catholics are as certain of the sense of Scripture, as Protestants are that they have the letter.* Now I believe any Reader will be as much puzzled to guess, how this comes in, or what relation it has to this dispute, as I am. I tell the new Convert, that his old Protestant Friend has as much certainty of his Religion as he has; for tho' he flatters himself with the conceit of an infallible Church, yet his belief of the Churches Infallibility is founded only on Reason and Argument, as the Protestant Faith is, and therefore his Faith is no more infallible than the Protestant Faith is, and so far they are equal. But then I add, that the Protestant has at least as good assurance, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, as the Papists can pretend to have, that the Church is infallible, and so far they may be allowed equal still, that the one thinks he has an infallible Guide, the other an infallible Rule of Faith: Now how can the Jesuit's conclusion come in here? *Catholics are as certain of the Sense of Scripture, as Protestants are.*

are, that they have the Letter. For the comparison did not lie between the Sense and the Letter of Scripture, but between that Evidence Papists have of the Infallibility of their Church, and Protestants have, that the Scriptures are the Word of God; both which is not infallible, but a rational Evidence, and therefore so far equal: and this he has nothing to say to. In the *Preserv. Confid.* p. 29. he represents it otherwise: *This is the case; On one side there is supposed an infallible Interpreter of the Christians great Law-Book, (for thus Dr. Sherlock states the case) on the other are some men (far the greater part unlearned and weak) who allow not any Sense to this Book, which seems to them to contradict their Sense or Reason, or any other principle of their Knowledge. And I am asked, Whether I proceed more prudently in receiving the Sense of the Law from that Interpreter (which is actually supposed infallible) or in proceeding by the second Method.* Now this is as wide of the mark as t'other; I never suppose an infallible Interpreter; never make any dispute, whether I should submit to an infallible Interpreter, or follow my own Reason; which were indeed a ridiculos question, supposing the Interpreter were actually infallible; but our only dispute was, Whether a man, who by the appearing evidence of Reason, is perswaded to believe an infallible Judge, believes more infallibly than a Protestant does, who believes also upon the evidence of Reason and Argument? This is the Question he cannot answer, and herefore would lose, if he could.

But then I added, that Protestants had much the advantage of Papists, because besides that general assurance they had, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and the infallible Rule of Faith, they are in particular assured, that the Faith they profess is agreeable to the Scripture, or expressly contained in it, and does not contradict either sense or Reason, nor any other Principle of Knowledge;

A Vindication of the First Part of

whereas Papists have no other evidence for the particular Articles of their Faith, but the infallible Authority of their Church, which is the last resolution of their Faith, and that many times in contradiction to Sense, and Reason, and Scripture, as far as fallible men can judge of it: *So that we have as much assurance of every Article of our Faith, as they have of the Infallibility of their Church:* The meaning of which is, that we have a rational assurance of every Article of our Faith in particular, as they think, they have the assurance of Reason and Argument, that their Church is infallible. To which he answers, *If he means, they have the same proofs for this, which Catholicks have for the Infallibility of the Church----- it is false.* No, Sir, I do not mean the same, for I hope they are better, but proofs of the same kind, *i. e.* from Reason and Argument, which are the only proofs they can pretend to, for the Infallibility of their Church; and therefore our Assurance (for that I said, not *Proofs*) is of the same kind too, a moral rational Assurance, not infallible, for that they have not for Infallibility itself, as our Answerer confess above.

But the Argument he hints in his Answer, *p. 5.* is so very new, and so very pretty, that I cannot pass it: *If he means, they have the same proofs for this, which Catholics have for the Infallibility of the Church, that is, for the being of that Church which declares her self Infallible (for a Church erring in such a point, would cease to be the Church of Christ) then 'tis evidently false.* The Argument is this, that the Infallibility of a Church, which declares herself infallible, is as evident as the being of that Church; for if she declares her self infallible, and is not infallible, such an Error as this makes her cease to be the Church of Christ. So that the Church of *Rome* is either an infallible Church, or no Church: Well, for Argument's sake, we will say she is no Church, and try then, how he can

can prove her Infallibility. But he has another bold stroke in what follows: That *the Christians of this Age have the same evidence of Her* (he must mean the Church of Rome) *being the Church of Christ, and of her teaching Truth, and consequently of her Infallibility, which she hath of Christ, viz. Prophecie, Miracles, &c.* What will no less evidence serve his turn? is it full as evident, that the Church of Rome is the Church of Christ, and speaks Truth, and consequently is Infallible (which it seems every one that speaks truth must by consequence be) as that there was such a person as Christ, the true Prophet and Messiah? I hope by Prophecies, he does not mean the Revelations of St. John, nor by Miracles, the School of the Eucharist.

His next exception is against that Argument: *If you must not use your Reason and private Judgment, then you must not by any Reason be perswaded to condemn the use of Reason; for to condemn is an act of Judgment, which you must not use in matters of Religion: So that this is a point which no man can dispute against, and which no man can be convinced of by disputing, without the reproach of self-contradiction.* Here our Jesuit is as pleasant as his wit would serve him; the sum of his Answer is, That a man may be convinced by Reason, that he ought to choose a Guide, and not to trust his Reason in all things. I readily grant it, for this is to use our Reason; but the inquiry is, Whether Reason can convince any man, that he ought to follow this Guide in contradiction to his own Sense and Reason: whether because Reason will direct a sick man to choose a Physician, it will direct him also to submit to this Physician when he certainly knows that he gives him Poison.

The next Principle, which overthrows the use of common Sense and Reason (for that is his charge against me) is this, *That we must allow of no Reason against the Authority*

A Vindication of the First Part of

I thought all this were true (as I believe not a word of it is) I should only conclude, that it were great pity that there is not an Universal Pastor and Infallible Judge Instituted by Christ; but if you would have me conclude from the Premises, Ergo, there is an Universal Pastor and infallible Judge, I must beg your pardon for that: for these Arguments do not prove that there is such a Judge, but that there ought to be one, and therefore I must conclude no more from them. This, he says, is not only to misuse humane Reason, but to deny Wisdom and Reason in God; Alphonsus the Royal Mathematician, was ever looked on as guilty of a horrid Blasphemy, for having said he thought he could have ordered some things better than God did, at the first Creation. 'Tis one of as deep a dye, to think God ought to have done, what we believe, that he hath not done.

But do I any where say, that God ought to have done, what I believe he has not done? do I any where say, that God ought by necessary and infallible means to have prevented Schisms and Heresies? Dare our Author himself say this, who assigns this as the reason, why *the Infallibility of the Church is no more than morally evident*, because otherwise it were impossible that any Heresie should be: which at least supposes, that God did not intend to make it impossible, that there should be Heresies and Schisms; and therefore though we should grant it absolutely necessary to prevent all Heresies and Schisms, that there should be an Oecumenical Pastor and Infallible Judge; is this to grant it necessary, that there should be one, or to say, that there ought to be one, unless I had said also, that it were absolutely necessary that all Heresies and Schisms should be prevented? Is there no difference between saying, that such a thing is absolutely necessary to such an end, and to say, that such an end is absolutely necessary.

But however, where do I say, that God has not done that,

that which I believe he ought to have done? is it the same thing to say, such a thing is not, and such a thing is not proved by such an Argument? and yet this is the utmost that I say, that the supposed necessity of an infallible Judge, does not prove, that there is such a Judge; but only that there ought to be one, and I must conclude no more from it; and does this overthrow the use of Reason, to conclude no more from an Argument, than the Argument will prove? whatever any man apprehends necessary, to be sure, he is mightily inclined to believe, but whoever will believe like a reasonable creature, must have good evidence for what he believes, and yet that we believe it necessary is no evidence, that it is; not that God will not do, what is necessary to be done, but because that may not be necessary, which we vainly and presumptuously imagine to be so: which is the very reason I assign for it in the words immediately following. *indeed this is a very fallacious way of reasoning: because that we may call useful, convenient, necessary, may not be so in itself; and we have reason to believe it is not so, if God have not appointed, what we think so useful, convenient, or necessary: which is a truer and more modest way of reasoning, than to conclude, that God has appointed such a Judge, when such thing appears, only because we think it so useful and necessary, that God ought to do it.* Which is not to excuse bad Saying with a good one, as the Jesuite pretends in answer to the Footman, (*Preservat. Consider. p. 136.*) but to justify a good Saying with a good Reason. But if it were such blasphemy in Alphonsus to say, that *he thought could have ordered some things better than God did at the first Creation*, let the Jesuite consider what it is, to mend what God has done in the work of our Redemption, on a meer supposition, that it may be mended: for pery is nothing else but a mending, or more properly asking, a *corrupting* the Gospel of Christ with a blasphe-

Vindication of the First Part of

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or manding it. And I think to say, that
 what there is no other proof he has done,
 that we think he ought to have done it, ~~is~~
 that God ought to have done, what it does not ap-
 pear he has done; and if not to be, and not to appear, is
 the same in this case, then this is equivalent to saying
 that God ought to have done, what he has not done. And
 this I hope is sufficient for the Vindication of those Prin-
 ciples, which are pretended to overthrow the Use of Com-
 mon Sense and Reason.

S E C T. II.

*The Principles pretended to make void all Faith vin-
 dicated.*

*Answer to Pro-
 fess. p. 6.*

HE begins with proving the Protestant Faith, *not to*
 be a *Divine Faith*, because it is not a *certain one*;
 which if it were true, is like proving a man not to live,
 because he is weak: for if there be as much certainty, as
 is absolutely necessary to the essence of Faith, it may be
 a true Faith, though weak, as a weak man is alive still:
 and Faith receives its denomination of Divine or Hu-
 mane Faith, not from the Certainty or Uncertainty of it,
 but from the Authority on which it rests; a Divine Au-
 thority makes a Divine Faith, Humane Authority an
 Humane Faith, and both these may be either certain or
 uncertain, or, to speak properly, strong or weak: so that
 to prove, that the Protestant Faith is not *Divine*, because
 it is not *Certain*, is like disproving the Essential Properties
 by Changeable Accidents, that a Man is not a reasonable
 Creature, because he is not strong: for there is no more
 necessary connexion between Faith being Divine, and
 being Strong or Certain, than between Reason and Bodily.

the Preservative against P O P E R Y.

41

ly Strength; a weak Man may be a reasonable Creature, and a weak Faith may be Divine, if it be founded on a Divine Authority.

But I wish the Jesuite had told us, what that degree of Certainty is, which makes a Faith *Divine*, whether any thing less than the certainty of Infallibility can do it; for this used to be the old Argument, that our Faith is not Divine nor Certain, because it is not infallible, but if they will abate any thing of Infallibility, we will vie all other degrees of Certainty with them, and that he very fairly quitted before, when he owned and proved, that there could be no more than Moral Evidence for the Infallibility of their Church, and then I am sure, they can have no more than a Moral Evidence for the rest of their Faith, which is all founded upon their Churches Infallibility.

Well, having proved, that our Faith cannot be Divine, because it is not certain, he next undertakes to prove, that our Faith is not certain: because *we cannot have an Act of Faith of any One Article, till our Rule of Faith proposes it, i. e. till we know certainly what Scripture teaches of it, not by any one Text, but by comparing all the Texts that speak of that Subject.* Very well, we cannot believe any thing upon the Authority of Scripture, which is our Rule of Faith, till we know, that it is in Scripture; wisely observed, and we grant it. Let us see, what follows. 1. *Then a Protestant must certainly know, that he hath all the Books of Holy Writ.* 2. *That all those, he owns for such were really written by inspired Pens.* The second we accept of, but there is no need to submit to his first Condition. That a Protestant must certainly know, that *he hath all the Books of Holy Writ*; that is, he must be able to prove, that there never were any other Books written by the Apostles or other inspired Men, but what we receive into our Canon of Scripture; which is to

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A Vindication of the First Part of

prove a negative, which is always thought unreasonable, and at this distance from the Apostolick Age is impossible, but whenever the Church of *Rome* will prove this of their Canon of Scripture, we will prove it of ours. In the mean time it is sufficient, that we reject no Books, which have been always acknowledged by the Universal Church, and that the Books we receive have been received for inspired Writings by the Universal Church; and if ever there were any other Books written by the Apostles or Evangelists, which are now lost, we have reason to believe, that the Church does not need them, but has a perfect Rule of Faith and Manners without them; for the Divine Providence would never permit, that the Church should want any necessary part of the Rule of Faith.

He proceeds. 3ly. *And (since the Letter kills) that he understands the true sense of each Text which relates to the Object of that Act of Faith.* 4ly. *That he remember them all, so as comparing them, to see which is the clearer to expound the obscurer, and what is the result of them all, (for any one he understands not, or hath forgotten, may possibly be that one that must expound the rest) he cannot have one Act of Faith.*

Now, not to take notice of his ridiculous, not to say blasphemous, misapplication of Scripture in that Parenthesis, *the Letter kills*, by which St. Paul understands the Law, which he calls the *Letter*, or an External Administration, and *the Ministration of Death, and of Condemnation*, in distinction from the Gospel, which is the *Ministration of the Spirit, and the Ministration of Righteousness*, 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9. but our learned Jesuite understands it of the Letter of the Gospel as distinguished from the Sense of it, which is such a distinction as no men of sense ever thought of, till the Church of *Rome* found it necessary to distinguish the Letter and the Words of Scripture from

from the Sense of it, and to separate them too, which they have effectually done; but yet how the Letters, which are very innocent things in all other Books, should be such killing things in Scripture, is worthy of the Wit and Learning of a Jesuite to unriddle: But I say, to let this pass, I grant a Protestant must understand the true sense of Scripture (which must be done by venturing to understand the killing Letter of it) before he can know, much less believe, what the Scripture teaches; but that they should understand and remember every place of Scripture which relates to such a Subject, I see no reason for; if we have one or two or more plain and express places for it, it is enough, at least for ordinary Christians, and a great deal more than the Church of *Rome* has for any of her new Articles of Faith. For we are sure, what is plainly and expressly said in one place cannot be contradicted by another; and therefore if I had no more than that one plain Text, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, I should think it a sufficient Proof against the Worship of Saints and Angels, though there were no other Text in the Bible against it. Now whatever Papists say (for we desire to hear them prove as well as say) this is so far from being *impossible to any, or almost any man*, that every considering Protestant has sufficient assurance of all this to found a Divine Faith on.

Well, but *what says Dr. Sherlock to give Protestants any certainty?* Truly not one word, for that was not my business to shew what positive certainty Protestants have, but to shew upon what vain pretences Papists charge the Protestant Faith with uncertainty.

And 1. I observe, *that could they prove the Protestant Faith uncertain, this is no sufficient reason to turn Papists, because Protestants are uncertain, does this prove the Church Preservat.*
of Rome to be infallible, because the Church of England is P. 79.
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A Vindication of the First Part of

*fallible? must certainty be necessarily found amongst them, because it is not found with us? is Thomas an honest man, because John is a knave? Yes, he says, if the stolen goods were found with John, an honest Jury he conceives would bring Thomas in not guilty. And if Protestant Uncertainty, and Popish Infallibility, were to be decided by an honest Popish Jury, we might guess pretty near at their Verdict. But he says, there is a true Faith, and consequently a certain Rule of Faith. Protestants on one side choose one Rule, viz. the Holy Scriptures, for we have no other Rule; Catholics another; therefore not the Holy Scriptures, for that is the Protestant Rule: but here he ignorantly misrepresents his own Church; for the Church of Rome does own the Scriptures to be the Rule of Faith, though not a compleat and perfect Rule; but the dispute between Protestants and Papists, is not so much about the Rule, as about the Judge; but he seems not to understand this distinction between the Rule and the Judge of Faith. But now for his conceiving! I conceive then, that if the Protestant Rule be proved uncertain, (that is, the Holy Scriptures) 'tis plain, the Catholic Rule must be the certain one. But when the Scriptures are proved uncertain, I fear, there will be no Rule at all. But however, his Argument is so far true, that if he could prove, that there are but two Rules, that one is false, and the other true; then when he has proved one to be false, I grant without any more disputing, that the other is true: but now, though there can be but one true Rule, there may be a great many false ones, and then both the Rules in competition may be false and uncertain. In the *Preservat. Consider.* p. 38. he endeavours to save this; and now does not put the question about two Rules of Faith, for that he says, we are agreed on. *That the Scriptures are the Word of God, that if we understood the full extent of its sense and meaning, there would never*
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be Error or Hereſie amongst us. Which ſhews, that, as I obſerved before, he did not underſtand the difference between a Rule of Faith, and a Guide or Expoſitor, till ſome wiſer man had told him of it. Well, now *the thing in queſtion is, by what method we ought to come to that knowledge, as far as it is neceſſary to a Chriſtian.* And I ſay, *that all the methods are reduced to theſe two heads: that we are guided to the certain knowledge of what God hath revealed, either by a knowledge communicated to each of us, or by a knowledge communicated only to Guides appointed to direct the reſt.* What he means by this *communicated knowledge* I cannot tell; for we think the Scriptures may be underſtood without either publick or private Enthuſiaſms, as all other Books are to be underſtood, by conſidering the uſe and ſignification of words, the ſcope and deſign of the place, and by comparing one Text with another, and the like: Thus the Guides of the Church muſt underſtand Scripture, and by their aſſiſtance thus private Chriſtians may underſtand Scripture. This all Mankind confeſs to be one way of underſtanding Scripture, the ſame way that all men uſe to underſtand any Writing, nay the only natural way, that we know of: No, ſays the Church of *Rome*, there is another poſſible way, for God to direct the Guides, the Pope of *Rome*, or General Council by an infallible Spirit in expounding Scripture: right ſay I, this is poſſible indeed, for God can do it, if he pleaſes, but it does not follow, this is any way at all, till it appears, that God has revealed, that he will take this way: ſo that before there can be any competition between theſe two ways of expounding Scriptures, it muſt be proved, that there are two ways; the Proteſtant way is acknowledged by all Mankind, for Nature teaches no other way of underſtanding Books, whether of Humane or Divine Compoſition; that there is ſuch a way as the Popiſh Method muſt be proved by Revelation, for:

for it depends wholly upon the Will of God, and therefore can be proved only by Revelation : now to make a competition between two ways of expounding Scripture, before it is proved there are two ways is ridiculous ; and much more ridiculous to prove the certainty of the unknown and unproved way, from the uncertainty of the known way : if they can prove, the Protestant way of expounding Scripture, which is the only way we know of, to be uncertain, the consequence is, that there is no certain way of expounding Scripture, not that the Church of *Rome* is the infallible Interpreter of Scripture : and therefore any Protestant who is persuaded to own the Infallibility of the Church of *Rome*, because he is told, that the Protestant Faith is uncertain, is a very foolish Convert, and has so little sense and reason, that it were fit, he had an infallible Guide, if he were to be found.

So that he is a little too forward, when he says, *that all the Methods* (of coming to the knowledge of Scripture) *are reduced to these two heads*, for we know, but of *one* way of expounding Scripture, till he proves another ; and when he can prove his infallible Guide, we will give up Protestant certainty, as I told him before, but till he has in another way proved the infallible Authority of his Church in expounding Scripture, though he could prove our Faith uncertain, this cannot prove his own to be infallible.

In the next place I directed our Protestant to ask these Popish Disputants, *what they meant by the uncertainty of the Protestant Faith.* For this may signify two things, either, 1. *That the Objects of our Faith are in themselves uncertain, and cannot be proved by certain reasons.* Or, 2ly, *That our persuasion about these matters is uncertain and wavering.* The Jesuite answers, that this is not a true division, for *there is a third thing also, to wit, that whatever*

ever Reasons there may be for a thing, he who believes it, hath for the motive of his belief those certain Reasons.---For he that believes in Christ only because his Mother hath taught him so, hath a very uncertain, and no Divine Faith. But suppose this Mother be the Church, and he believes it only, because the Church hath taught him so, Has this man a divine and certain Faith? No doubt must our Jesuite say, because the Church is Infallible. But suppose this man can no more prove the Church to be infallible, than that his natural Mother is infallible; What difference is there between those, who believe upon the Authority of the Church, and of their Mother? I can assign none, and shall be glad to learn the difference from our Jesuite. He who believes the true Christian Faith, and lives in conformity to it, shall certainly be saved, or else I fear we must at least damn half the Christians in the World, whether Protestants or Papists, for want of understanding the reasons of their Faith. Nay I am afraid all Traditionary Christians must be damned, who believe this is the true Faith to day, because their Fathers and Mothers were taught so and believed so yesterday. So that I guess upon second thoughts our Jesuite will compound this matter with me, and let fall the third part of the division, and I am contented at present, till I hear farther from him.

But he might have observed that I said, not only that *the Objects of our Faith are in themselves certain, but that they may be proved by certain Reasons.* And therefore for him to say, that they are indeed in themselves certain, but not to any Protestant, whose Rule of Faith cannot make him certain of any one Article, without offering to shew, that the Reasons, why we believe are uncertain, is to drop half of the first branch of the division, and then to complain of the want of it. When the Footman had minded him, that our Rule of Faith is the Scripture, and therefore if what he says be true, the Scripture cannot make us certain of

A Vindication of the First Part of

any one Article of Faith, instead of answering this Blunder, his Superiors only correct his Words in a Parenthesis, *Prefero. Confid.* p. 40. *The Protestant Rule of Faith (considering the Method he applies it by) cannot make him certain, &c.* which is a plain confession, that the Footman was too hard for the Jesuite, but then he should have shewn us, how we had misapplied, and what the uncertainties of our Reasons are, but I suppose, he will take time to consider that.

As for what he calls my Rule of Faith, which he says *justifies Turk, Jew, and Gentile. We believe all that God hath revealed, and nothing else, is not all, that he hath revealed certain?* Though I grant a Divine Revelation is the only Rule of my Faith; yet here I spoke not of the Rule but of the Objects of my Faith, and challenge him to shew, that we do reject any thing that God has revealed in the Gospel of his Son, or believe any thing else; and dare him, as I well might all professed Christians, to deny the truth or certainty of what is revealed in the Gospel: but *Turks and Jews believe what they think in their judgments God hath revealed, that is their Rule, and 'tis yours.* And is there any fault to be found with this so far? Do Papists believe, what they think in their judgments, God has not revealed, or what they think, he has revealed? If they believe, what they think God has revealed, then they justify Jews and Turks too, as much as Protestants. No says the Jesuite, *Your own private judgments are on both hands your Guides, and not any authority established by Almighty God.* Now I confess, I am not ashamed to own, that Turk and Jew and Gentile, that is all Mankind except Papists, agree with Protestants in this, that all men must believe with their own judgments, and that there is no other faculty to believe with: and much good may it do Papists, that they have found out a way to believe without judgment, wherein they differ from the rest of Mankind.

Prefero. Confid.
sidered, p. 40.

Mankind. As for *their Authority appointed by God*, on which they must rely without using their own Judgment, when they can prove any such Authority we will submit to it.

I proved that the Articles of the Christian Faith, which Protestants believe, are certain and founded on certain Reasons, as they themselves must grant, unless they renounce the Christian Religion, for here Infallibility itself cannot help them out. *For Infallibility cannot make that certain, which is in its self uncertain, an infallible man must know things as they are, or else he is mistaken and ceases to be infallible, and therefore what is certain he infallibly knows to be certain, and what is uncertain he infallibly knows to be uncertain; for the most certain and infallible Knowledge does not change its Object, but sees it just as it is.* Now this he says is notoriously false, since she (the Church) is not infallible by any light of her own, but by the guidance of the Spirit of Truth. Now this is nothing to the purpose by what light the Church sees, the Question is, Whether an infallible Church can know that to be certain, which is uncertain? if she can, then she infallibly knows that which is not true. But were not the Apostles certain of what Christ told them, when they acknowledged him the Son of God before he gave them certain Reason for it? But was not Christ's telling them so a certain Reason? If they believed without Reason, I am of opinion, how blind an impiety soever it be, that they believed too soon. I envy no Church the privilege of believing infallibly without Reason or Evidence, but it is well for the Church of Rome if she have this privilege, for unless she can be Infallible without Reason, nay in contradiction to it, I am sure, she is not infallible. But what conversation is here? Does the Church of Rome infallibly know, that the Christian Religion is certainly true? Does she infallibly know, that the certain Truth of Christian Religion is founded upon certain Reasons? if so,

more with the Church of *Rome*, then with the Church of *England*.

The plain case is this ; our *Roman* Adversaries perswade Protestants, that they can have no certainty of their Faith, because Protestants are so much divided about it ; and therefore they must go to the Church of *Rome*, which alone pretends to Infallibility. But say I, why should these differences among Protestants oblige them to go over to the Church of *Rome*, when Protestants have no difference about this matter, but are all agreed, that the Church of *Rome* is so far from being infallible, that she is a very corrupt Church : I do not say, that the differences of Protestants is a good Argument to prove the uncertainty of their Faiths, nor their bare agreement to prove the certainty of it, but I say, one proves as much as t'other, and therefore 'tis a better reason to Protestants not to turn Papists, that all Protestants are agreed, that the Church of *Rome* is not infallible, but has greatly erred, then it is for Protestants to go to the Church of *Rome* for Infallibility, because they differ in some things among themselves ; especially considering that many points they now differ about, will not be reconciled by their going to the Church of *Rome* ; for the same points are as fiercely disputed among them too, as to instance at present only in the *Quinquarticular* Controversie.

CHAP. III.

A Vindication of some Positions, which are pretended to make void all Scripture-proof, all use of Fathers and Councils, and of Civil Charity, and Moral Justice to our Neighbours.

AS for Scripture-proof: I was directing Protestants what kind of Scripture-proof to demand for Transubstantiation: and having shewn that the Doctrine of Transubstantiation does manifestly contradict the evidence of all our Senses and the most necessary principles of Reason, I told them, that it is but reasonable, that the evidence for Transubstantiation should at least be equal to the evidence against it, and therefore *they must demand such a Scripture-proof of Transubstantiation, as cannot possibly signify any thing else; or else it will not answer that evidence which we have against Transubstantiation: P115. p. 72.* for sense and reason pronounce Transubstantiation to be naturally impossible; and therefore unless it be as impossible to put any other sense upon Scripture, as it is to reconcile Transubstantiation to sense and reason, there is not such good evidence for Transubstantiation, as there is against it. This he repeats after his usual manner, to take care that no body shall understand what it relates to, or see the force of the Argument; and in answer to it he gives us a new instance of his good will to the Doctrine of the Trinity. He says, *A Text which cannot possibly have another sense, doth not leave it in any one's liberty, who owns Scripture to be an Heretick; therefore the Church produced no such* *Answer p. 2.*
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A Vindication of the First Part of.

Text against the Arians or Nestorians; whence it evidently follows, that according to Dr. Sherlock, the Arians and Nestorians were not bound to believe the Trinity and Incarnation of Christ. But did I say, that nothing can be proved but by such express Texts, as it is not possible to understand otherwise? I said, this was necessary to prove any Doctrine which sense and reason declare to be absolutely impossible. And will he say the Doctrine of the Trinity is such a Doctrine? No he says, *Preservative Considered*, p. 45. *But they so appeared to the Nestorians and Arians, and that is the case put by Dr. Sherlock:* but I put no case about meer appearing, but of such palpable contradictions as the sense and reason of all Mankind agree in: as Papists themselves cannot deny, and know not how to justify, without pressing the Almighty Power of God to make good their absurd Imaginations. Now where there is only an appearance of contradiction, where a Doctrine only lies cross to mens natural reason, there such express Texts as do more evidently prove that Doctrine, then that Doctrine does evidently contradict reason, is a sufficient foundation for the belief of it, because in this case there is more evidence for it than against it: and did not the Church alledge such Scripture-proofs for the Trinity? And are there no such Proofs to be alledged? He thinks they did not, because then the *Arians* could not have continued Hereticks; for a Text which cannot possibly have any other sense, doth not leave it in any ones liberty to be a Heretick. But I suppose, he will allow, that I spoke not of a natural but of a moral impossibility; now a moral impossibility of interpreting Scripture otherwise is, when a man cannot reasonably do it without offering manifest violence to the words, and this a wilful and obstinate Heretick may do, how plain and self-evident, how incapable forever the words are of any other possible sense to a reasonable

nable and impartial Inquirer. This principle, I confess, makes void all Scripture-proof of such Doctrines as sense and reason pronounce absolutely impossible, but this is no injury, but the greatest right we can do the Scripture. But I cannot without some indignation observe, how the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity is upon all occasions introduced by these men as contradicting sense and reason, which would make one suspect, they kept it for no other reason but to justify the absurdities and contradictions of Transubstantiation.

As for the making void the use of Fathers and Councils to unlearned men, it is the thing I designed, and I am very glad if I have done it: but as for learned men they may make such use of them still, as such Writings are designed for; not to make them the Rule of Faith, but either to learn what was the Doctrine and Practice of the Church in their days, or what their private Opinions were, or how they expounded Scripture and the like: that I call it *squabbling* about the sense of Fathers, if the expression be undecent, it is owing to himself and some such late Scriblers, whose Disputes have been nothing else but Squables. But I cannot blame him, that he is so angry, that I direct the Protestant to inquire, *Whether such Books were written by that Father, whose Name it bears*, for he knows such an inquiry has very lately cost him dear, I was going to say a blush, but that is impossible. If such Questions as I ask cannot be answered to the satisfaction of learned men, they are of no more use to them, than they are to the unlearned, who cannot answer them themselves, and want the Learning which is necessary to make them capable of a satisfactory Answer, and this is all the Answer I shall return to this Charge.

A Vindication of the First Part of

His next Charge is a dreadful one : *Such Principles as make void all use of Civil Charity and Moral Justice to our Neighbours.* He lays it in the very last Section of the *Preservative, Concerning Protestant Mis-representations of Popery.* Wherein I shewed, how vain and silly this charge was, and he has not one word to say in defence of it. Among other things I observed, that *these men, who complain so much of Mis-representing, endeavour to make the Doctrines of the Church of Rome look as like Protestant Doctrines, as ever they can, as if there were little or no difference between them.*-----The truth is, the chief Mystery in this late Trade of Representing and Mis-representing is no more but this, to joyn a Protestant Faith with Popish Practices, to believe as Protestants do, and to do as Papists do. This I gave some few instances of out of the Representor, and shewed that their Faith, as he Represented it, came very near and in some cases was the very same with the Protestant Faith, but their Practice was Popish. How is this contrary to *Civil Charity and Moral Honesty* ? He says it is this, *When a man's exterior Actions are naturally capable of a good and pious meaning, and he ever and clearly declares, that it is his, yet to fasten upon him another opposite design and meaning.* But how does this concern me, who fasten no meaning at all upon their Actions, but only barely relate, what they profess to believe, and what they practice. He instances in two, and let all the World judge, who makes void *Civil Charity and Moral Honesty*, He, or I.

To insinuate, says he, that a Catholick thinks the Virgin Mary more powerful in Heaven than Christ, he tells you, that he says Ten Ave-Maries for one Pater Noster ; whereas all that I say is, He (the Papist Represented) believes it damnable, to think the Virgin Mary more powerful in Heaven than Christ, which is Protestant Doctrine. But
yet

yet he prays to her oftner than either to God or Christ ; says ten Ave-Maries for one Pater Noster ; which is a Popish Devotion. Is here any breach of Moral Honesty in this ? is not all this true ? do I put any sense or interpretation upon this action ? I believe all men will think, that this does more than insinuate, what a belief they have of the power of the Virgin ; and this the Jesuite was sensible of, and therefore says, that I insinuate it, but I will leave it as I did at first, to what judgment all indifferent men will make of it.

In the next place, he says, I charge the *Catholicks with worshipping the visible Species in the Eucharist* : Hear my words again ; *He believes it unlawful to commit Idolatry, and most damnable to worship any Bredden God ; which is spoke like a Protestant ; but yet he pays Divine Adoration to the Sacrament, which is done like a Papist.* Here is nothing about worshipping the visible Species in the Eucharist ; but whatever is the Sacrament, they worship, and must do so by the Doctrine of their Church ; if they can make a Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, without the visible Species, then according to their Doctrine, they need not worship the visible Species, if they can't, they must, for they must adore the Sacrament ; and if the Sacrament should prove to be Bread and Wine, not the natural Body and Blood of Christ, and it is strange, if it should not, then I need not tell them what they worship. But those matters have been debated often enough of late.

He concludes with an advice to Protestants, urging the Argument against Scriptures, which I had before done against Fathers. *Amongst Christians, there is not one in an hundred thousand, who understand all Scripture ; and it is morally impossible they should ; and therefore certainly there must be an easier and shorter way to understand Christian Religion.*

A Vindication of the First Part, &c.

Religion than this, or else the generality of Mankind, even of professing Christians, are out of possibility of Salvation. I grant every word of it to be true, if understanding all Scripture, as he puts it, were necessary to Salvation; but the only easier and shorter way is to understand so much of the Scripture as is necessary to Salvation, and let him when he pleases, if he dare venture the Blasphemy of it, prove that this is morally impossible to the generality of Mankind, even of professing Christians.

A

A
VINDICATION
 OF THE
SECOND PART
 OF THE
Preservative against POPERY.

Here our Jesuite gives me a great many hard Words, but nothing of Argument; He talks tragically of Calumnies and Misrepresentations, how much he proves of it, unless a bold Accusation must pass for a Proof, I dare leave to every ordinary Reader, who will compare my Book with his. He is much off of his byass here, for I did not dispute directly against any Popish Doctrines, but used such collateral Arguments, as are very evident and convincing to ordinary Readers, but so much out of the road, that the Jesuite could find nothing in his Common-place Book about it, and therefore does not pretend to answer any one *Section* of my Book; but yet out of every *Section* he picks some single Sayings, and if he meets with an Argument, that he cannot answer, he takes some few words of it, and calls it Calumny and Misrepresentation; the only way I have to write such an Answer to him, as may be fit to be read, is to give a short Abstract of each *Section* of my Book, and to take notice, where those Passages come in, which he calls Calumnies and Misrepresentations.

SECT. I

Concerning Idolatry.

4th Matth. 10.Preserv. Con-
sid. p. 61.

I Shewed the great Design of our Saviour was more perfectly to extirpate all Idolatry. To this purpose he has more perfectly instructed us in the Nature of God. To this end he confines all Religious Worship to God alone. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* It is his answer to the Devil, when he tempted him to fall down and worship him ; but he gives such an answer, as excludes all Creatures, not only good, but bad Spirits from any share in Religious Worship. For he does not deny to worship him meely because he was the Devil, but because we must worship notie but God. Which is as good a reason against the Worship of the most glorious Angels, as of the Devil himself. This he calls a Misrepresentation, and to make it so, first very fillily misrepresents my words, and says, that I charge the Church of Rome, that *she doth not pay to God alone, that degree of Worship, which the tempting Devil demanded of Christ.* But I say not one word there about the Church of Rome, tho' the application was obvious and he made it for me : but then I do not blame them, that *they do not pay that degree of Worship to God, which the Devil demanded of Christ ;* which was but an inferior degree of Worship, and therefore not proper for the Supreme Deity ; but that they pay any degree, how inferior soever, of Religious Worship to Saints and Angels, or any other Being besides God, for that is the import of our Saviour's Answer to the Devil, and answers the pretence of the Church of Rome, that *she does not give latria, or that Sovereign Worship, which is due to the Supreme God, but only dulia, or an Inferior Worship to Saints and Angels ;* whereas our Saviour's Argument proves, that no degree of Worship is to be given to any but God. He says farther, p. 64. *That Christ, by refusing himself all Worship to God's Enemy the Devil, teaches us to pay none at all to God's Saints and Angels, is an inference that no one but Dr. Sherlock was ever able to make.* Then it seems, I have the honour of inventing a good Argument, which this Jesuite dares not attempt to answer : let him shew me if he can, that to Worship none

none but God, excludes only the Worship of the Devil, not of Saints and Angels.

As a farther proof of this, I add, *Our Saviour denies to Worship him, though the Devil made no terms with him about the kind or degrees of Worship. He does not require him to offer Sacrifice to him, (which is the only Act of Worship the Church of Rome appropriates to the Supreme God) but only to bow down before him, as an expression of Devotion.* This he calls a Misrepresentation, that *Sacrifice is the only Act of Worship, which the Church of Rome appropriates to the Supreme God; which is the first time this was called a Misrepresentation; and yet he himself owns, p. 64. that Sacrifice is indeed the only exterior Worship inseparable from latria, and therefore never to be offered to any but God.* And is not this what I said? did I deny, that the Church of Rome paid any other Worship to God, but Sacrifice? but I say, and so says our Jesuite, that there is no other external Act of Worship so peculiar to God, that it can be given to no other being, but only Sacrifice; and therefore since the Devil did not demand of Christ to sacrifice to him, he did not demand of him that degree of Worship, which alone the Church of Rome thinks peculiar and appropriate to God, and yet Christ tells us of all other Acts of Worship, which the Church of Rome thinks may be separated from *latria*, and therefore given to Creatures, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

I added, that to prevent the Worship of Inferior Demons, who were worshipped as Mediators to the Supreme God, God advances his own Son to be the Universal Mediator, and the Supreme and Sovereign Lord of the World, that *all Mankind should make their Addresses and Supplications to him, and offer up their Prayers only in his Name, that in him they should find acceptance, and in no other Name.* Hence he concludes, that I charge the Church of Rome, (though I did not mention her) that *they offer not their Prayers only in the Name of Christ, that in him they may find acceptance.* And this he calls a Misrepresentation; and I will venture to be a Misrepresenter for once, and charge them with it: for if they pray to God in the Name and Merits of Saints and the blessed Virgin; if they pray to them to intercede for them with God, as appears in all their Offices, then they do not pray only in the Name of

Christ, nor expect to be accepted only for his sake.

I summed up this Argument thus : Now this being so apparently one end of Christ's coming into the World to suppress the Idolatry of Creature-Worship, and to confine all Religious Worship to one Supreme Being, in opposition to the many Gods of the Heathens, and to teach us to make our Applications to this One God, by One Mediator, (this, he says, is another Misrepresentation, that they make not their Applications to One God by One Mediator, which is true, if by One he means only One, for they have Many) in opposition to the Worship of inferior Deities ; can any man imagine, that the Worship of Saints and Angels and the Virgin Mary, can be any part of the Christian Religion? which is not a direct Proof against the Worship of Saints and Angels, but an Argument from what is likely, fit and congruous, and consistent with our Saviour's design, to root out all remains and all appearances of Idolatry ; which makes it improbable and incongruous to the utmost degree, that Christ should permit the Worship of Saints and the Virgin Mary, as it is practised in the Church of Rome ; with Temples and Altars and Images, with Solemn Prayers and Vows, and Solemn Processions, which has so much the external appearance of that Idolatrous Worship, which the Heathens paid to their Gods, that there is no visible distinction between them. And if Christ intended to root out Idolatry, it is highly improbable, that he would allow, so much of the external pomp and shew of it, if it were no more : Those who think this may be, may believe the Worship of Saints and Angels to be a Gospel-Doctrine, notwithstanding this Argument ; but such Arguments as these are thought by most men to have some weight in them ; as for instance, That a Man, who is very curious to preserve his Wives Chastity, will not suffer her to receive all Amorous Addresses and Courtships from Strangers, no not from his dearest Friends ; That a Prince, who is so jealous of any Rivals and Partners, as to make it Treason to usurp the meanest of the *insignia Majestatis*, will not suffer the greatest Favourite to wear the Imperial Crown, nor to sit on his Throne, and receive the Addresses and Homage of his Subjects upon the knee. As I observed before, that how dear soever the Saints are to God, they are but his Creatures, and if Sovereign Princes will not receive their greatest Favourites into their Throne, much less will God.

This.

This is another of his Misrepresentations, that I say, *the Papists, by their worshipping Saints, Angels, and the Virgin Mary, put them in the Throne of God*; but this I do not say, but only that God will not take any of his Creatures into his Throne. But yet if giving Religious Worship placed the Heathen Deities in God's Throne, I would gladly be satisfied, why the Worship of Saints and Angels should not be thought to do the same: I am sure to worship Saints in the same Temple and at the same Altar, and with the same humble Prostrations, and in the very same Prayers, that we worship God, looks very like placing a Favourite on the same Throne with his Prince; but yet this is not the dispute, whether they do so or not, but whether it be not so like it, that it is unreasonable to think, that Christ, who came to root out all Idolatry, will allow or command it.

Another kind of Idolatry the Heathens were fond of, was, the Worship of Images and Pictures, whereby they represented their Gods as visibly present with them. For they wanted some material representations of their Gods, in which they might, as it were, see them present, and offer up their Petitions to them, and court them with some visible and sensible honours.

To cure this kind of Idolatry under the Law, though God forbade the Worship of Images, yet he appoints them to erect a Tabernacle or Temple, where he would dwell among them, and place the Symbols of his Presence, the Mercy-seat, and the Cherubims covering the Mercy-seat; which was a symbolical Representation of God's Throne in Heaven, where he is surrounded with Angels, as the Holy of Holies itself was the Figure of Heaven. Thus under the Law to give them assurance of his presence with them, though they could not see him, he had a peculiar Place for Worship, and peculiar Symbols of his Presence, but no Images to represent his Person, or to be the Objects of Worship.

And here I took notice of that Pretence of the Church of *Rome* for Image-Worship, that the Cherubims were worshipped by the *Jews*, and particularly answered the Arguments of the late Bishop of *Oxford* to prove it, and it had been worthy of the Jesuite to have made some reply to this, but he was wiser than to meddle with it: among other things, the Bishop had urged *David's* Exhortation to the People to Honour the

A Vindication of the Second Part of

here, how does it worship his Foot-stool, &c. ; or is it said, in Psalm, to prove, that the Jews worshipped the Cherubims ; this I said, was very strange, when he himself, four Pages before had said so, that the Ark was God's Foot-stool, and the Cherubims his Throne ; thus I apply David had exhorted the people to Worship the Ark, &c. &c. as he says, & God's Foot-stool, how does this prove, that they must Worship the Cherubims, which are God's Throne : this he calls a misrepresentation, and so it is indeed, and a very gross one too, but it is his own ; for he represents this as my Argument against the Worship of the Cherubims, that they were commanded indeed to Worship the Ark, which was God's Foot-stool, but not the Cherubims, which were his Throne : whereas I never granted, that by the Foot-stool of God was meant the Ark, but all that I said was, that if the Ark, as the Bishop affirmed, was meant by God's Foot-stool, and the Cherubims were his Throne, then though there had been such a Command to worship God's Foot-stool, this could not prove the worship of the Cherubims, which in his Divinity were not the Foot-stool, but the Throne of God. This he could not be ignorant of, because I expressly proved, that by the Foot-stool of God could not be meant the Ark, for the Ark was in the Holy of Holies, which was a figure of Heaven ; and neither the Heaven, nor any thing in it, but the Earth is in Scripture called God's Foot-stool ; as the Psalmist expressly applies it to Zion and the Holy Hill. And this I observed, is a sufficient confutation of his Exposition of the words, to bow down to, or worship his Foot-stool ; for Mount Zion or the Holy Hill was not the Object of Worship, nor Symbol of God's Presence ; but there God was present, and that was reason enough to worship him at his Foot-stool, and at his Holy Hill, as our English Translation reads it.

I added, Suppose the Jews were so direct their Worship towards the Mercy-seat, which was covered by the Cherubims, where God had promised to be present, how are the Cherubims concerned in this Worship ? the Worship was paid only to God, though directed to God, as peculiarly present in that place, which is no more than to lift up our eyes and hands to Heaven, where the Throne of God is, when we pray to him : but, he adds, the very Image (for example) of Christ crucified, is the Object of the Worship of Papists, which is certainly true ; but he should have given my own words. The Bishop
had

had said, *that bowing to or towards any thing*, was the same thing; this I granted, if they bowed to or towards any thing as the Object of Worship; and therefore had the *Jews* either bowed to or towards the Cherubims as the Objects of their Worship, as the Papists bow to or towards their Images, they had been equally guilty of Idolatry, and the breach of the Second Commandment; but when *bowing to* signifies bowing to an Object of Worship, and *bowing towards* signifies bowing to this Object of Worship, only towards such a place, where he is peculiarly present, this makes a vast difference. And this he calls a Misrepresentation, that I say, *Papists bow to their Images as Objects of Worship*; but this has been so often proved upon them in the several Answers to the Representer and *M. de Meaux* and his Vindicator, that it would be as foolish in me to prove it again, as it is impudent in him to deny it.

But I observed farther, that in the Gospel God has provided a more effectual remedy against Image-Worship in the *Incarnation of his Son*. Mankind have been always fond of some visible Deity, and because God cannot be seen they have gratified their superstition by making some visible Images and Representations of an invisible God: Now to take them off from mean corporeal Images and Representations, which are both a dishonour to the Divine Nature and debase the Minds of Men, God has given us a visible Image of himself; has clothed his own Eternal Son with Humane Nature, *who is the brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*.--- Now when God has given us a visible Image of himself, his eternal and incarnate Son, whom we may worship and adore, can we think he will allow us to worship material and sensible Images of Wood and Stone? And here the Jesuite finds another Misrepresentation, that *by the Incarnation God is visibly represented to us in our nature, but the Papists not contented with this contrary to the design of God, made man, make and adore other Images of God*. Here he has concealed what my Argument was, but the thing is true: that though God gave us a visible Image of himself to cure the Idolatry of Image-Worship, yet this is still retained and practised in the Church of *Rome*.

In summing up this Argument, I said, Since it was one main design of Christ's appearance to root out Idolatry, is it credible, that the Worship of Saints and Angels and the Virgin
Mary,

A Vindication of the Second Part of

Mary, the Worship of Images and Reliques, as it is practised in the Church of *Rome*, should be any part of the Christian Worship, or allowed by the Gospel of our Saviour? if Creature-Worship and Image-Worship were so offensive to God, *here is the Worship of Creatures and Images still, and therefore all the visible Idolatry, that ever was practised in the World before.* This is another of his Misrepresentations, but very true. No understanding Papist, that has any modesty, can deny, that they worship Creatures and Images, for that they should be worshipped is determined by their own Councils; now if there be any *salvo* to deliver the Church of *Rome* from the guilt of Idolatry in worshipping Creatures and Images, when the Heathens were Idolaters for doing it, yet here is the visible Worship of Creatures and Images, that is, all that was visible in the Idolatry of the Heathens. This was my Argument to shew how improbable it was, that Christ, who came to extirpate all Idolatry, should still allow the external and visible Worship of Creatures, which if it be not Idolatry, yet is all that was visible in the Idolatry of the Heathens: and it had better become him to have answered this Argument, than to have called it a Misrepresentation.

I observed farther. That the great difference the Papists can pretend between their Worship of Saints and Images, and what the Heathens did, whereby to excuse themselves from Idolatry, notwithstanding they worship Creatures and Images as the Heathens did, is that they have better Notions of the Worship of Saints and Angels and Images than the Heathens had; but I said, whether they had or no, would be hard to prove: *The Pagan Philosophers made the same Apologies for their Worship of Angels and Demons, and Images, which the learned Papists now make, and whether unlearned Papists have not as gross Notions, about the Worship of their Saints and Images, as the unlearned Heathens had is very doubtful, and has been very much suspected by learned Romanists themselves.* This he puts down for another Misrepresentation, though all learned men know it to be true. Had he ever read *Origen* against *Celsus*, he would have known, that that Philosopher had taught the Roman Doctors, how to defend the Worship of Saints and Images, and that the Father had confuted them long since; and had he looked into *Vives* upon *St. Aug. de Civitate Dei*, he would have found

found that learned Man make no great difference between unlearned Christians and Heathens as to these matters, to name no more at present.

I added; *Can we think, that Christ, who came to make a more perfect reformation, should only change their Country-Gods into Saints and Angels and the Virgin Mary, and give new Names to their Statues and Images?* This he calls a Misrepresentation too, tho' it neither represents nor misrepresents any body, that I know of, but only argues, what Christ was likely to do. For had Christ only forbid the Worship of Pagan Gods, and set up the Worship of Saints, it had not been to extirpate Creature-Worship, but only to change those particular Creatures, who were to be Objects of Worship, and instead of the Images of *Jupiter* and *Bacchus* to set up Images to Saints.

Thus I have considered the Misrepresentations charged upon the first Section of the *Preservative*; as for his own representation of the Faith and Practice of the Catholicks, as to their Worship, I am not concerned with it. There are a great many late Treatises, wherein those Matters are fully debated. Such as, *The Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome truly represented. The Object of Religious Worship. The Answer to Papists protesting against Protestant Popery.* The late Answers to *M. de Meaux* and his Vindicator; and a Book, which this Jesuite has some reason to know, *The Primitive Fathers no Papists.* And to these I refer my Reader, who needs any farther satisfaction.

SECT. II.

Concerning the great Love of God to Mankind, &c.

HE has found but six Misrepresentations and Calumnies in this Section, which is pretty moderate; and some few Arguments against Purgatory, and our recourse to Saints for their Prayers; which he says he has collected, (*not one omitted*) but when I read them over, I could not find anyone of them: I confess, it is a very dull and troublesome task to answer him; for he transcribes several Passages out of my Book, without representing their connexion with what goes before or what follows, or without telling, what their fault is, or offering one word to confute them: that whoever will but take the pains to

A Vindication of the Second Part of

must expiate the defects of our repentance and reformation : now this is a great deal more and a great deal less than the Gospel teaches us of God's love to Sinners. For the Gospel promises no mercy to any, but to true penitent and reformed Sinners, and therefore to receive men into favour *before their hearts are thus perfectly converted*, (which I suppose he means of an Evangelical not of a Legal Perfection of Conversion, that is, true and sincere Repentance) is more mercy than the Gospel promises ; and to torment such men in Purgatory, who are received to favour, is a great deal less ; and it is somewhat hard to understand the favour of a thousand years punishment, though it may be thought favour to receive Sinners, before they are perfectly converted. And yet he has told the plain truth of the case ; for this is the only thing, that can reconcile men to the thoughts of Purgatory, or make them think it an Act of Grace, that it is in exchange for the pleasures of Sin, which they are so very fond of ; and those who will venture Hell to enjoy their Lusts, may well think it an Act of Grace to turn Hell into Purgatory : but this is not the Gospel representation of God's love to Sinners ; which is to pardon none but true Penitents, and not to punish those in the next World, who are actually pardoned.

I granted, it is something, *To exchange the eternal punishment of Hell, which is due to sin, into the temporal punishment of Purgatory, but askt, Whether it would not have been a more perfect expression of love and goodness to have remitted the temporal punishment also of, it may be, some thousand years torment in Purgatory ? Whether this might not have been expected under a Dispensation of the most perfect Love ? And from that God, who sent his only begotten Son into the World to save Sinners ?* This is the force of the Argument, which the Jesuite conceals, that though Purgatory be more mercy than Hell, yet it does not answer that representation the Gospel makes of God's infinite love and compassion for penitent Sinners through Jesus Christ.

2. I observed, that in Purgatory, God does not only punish those whom he has pardoned, but he punishes for no other reason but Punishments sake. For thus the *Roman* Doctors tell us, that the Souls in Purgatory are in a state of Pardon, and in a state of perfect Grace, that they suffer the pains of Purgatory not to purge away any remains of Sin, or to purify and refine them, and make them more fit for Heaven, but only to bear the punishment due to Sin, for which they had made no satisfaction while they

they lived : now I dare boldly affirm, this is irreconcilable with any degree of love and goodness : a just punishment respects the guilt of Sin, but there is no guilt when the Sin is pardoned ; to make it an Act of Goodness, it must respect the reformation of the Sinner, which cannot be, when he is in a perfect state of Grace and needs no amendment ; and such punishments as neither respect the guilt of Sin, nor the reformation of the Sinner, are neither just nor good, which is the exact Notion of Purgatory. This he sets down as a Misrepresentation (p. 68.) but does not tell us why : this Doctrine is taught by *Roman* Divines, as I suppose he knows, or if he don't, let him consult *Bellarmin* or such good Catholick Writers.

I summed up this Argument thus : Our Protestant need not dispute much about Purgatory ; let him only ask a Popish Priest, How the Doctrine of Purgatory can be reconciled with that stupendious love of God declared to penitent Sinners in his Son Jesus Christ ? For it is a contradiction to the Notion of Goodness among men, to inflict such terrible punishments in meer Grace and Love, even when the sin is pardoned and the Sinner reconciled, and no longer in a state of discipline and trial. This is the force of the Argument, and here the Jesuite, if he likes it, may try his skill.

Secondly, Another Argument I urged against Purgatory was this, that it destroys or weakens that security the Gospel hath given Sinners of their Redemption from the Wrath of God, and the just punishment of their Sins. And that upon two accounts.

1. As it destroys mens hopes in the Merits of Christ, and the Atonement and Expiation of his Blood. For if the Blood of Christ does not deliver us from the punishment of Sin, what security is this to a Sinner ? Yes, you'll say, *Christ has redeemed us from eternal, though not from temporal punishments*, and therefore penitent Sinners shall not be eternally damned. This he puts down as a Misrepresentation, p. 67. and says, p. 73. *That Christ truly obtained remission from all temporal as well as eternal pain, and that whoever is regenerated by Baptism, be not only is not adjudged to eternal torments, but neither doth he suffer after death any Purgatory pains, if he die in that state of recovered innocency.* This I grant they own, that unless men sin after Baptism, they are neither in danger of Hell nor Purgatory ; and yet it is evident they deny that Christ has expiated the temporal punishments due to sin either in this World, or in Purgatory ; for if he had, there were

A Vindication of the Second Part of

an end both of the Popish Sacrament of Penance and Purgatory : and if Christ by his death had expiated the temporal punishments of sin, I would desire to know, why the temporal punishment of sin is not as well remitted by the Sacrament of Penance, as by Baptism ; since the expiation of Christ's Blood, as they pretend, is applied to us in both : and therefore this is a meer fallacy ; for though a Sinner in Baptism is delivered from all punishment due to sin, yet he is not in a proper sense delivered from what they call the temporal punishment of sin, for there was no such punishment due to sin before Baptism. Hell, not Purgatory, is the punishment of all sin before Baptism, and therefore a baptized Person is delivered by Christ from Hell, which is the only punishment due to Sins before Baptism ; and if he die before he commits any actual sin after Baptism, he escapes Purgatory and goes immediately to Heaven, not because Christ's death has delivered him from the temporal pains of Purgatory, but because he had done nothing to deserve it. For what they call the temporal punishment of sin is only the pains of Penance, and no man is capable of the Sacrament of Penance, who is not a baptized Christian ; and yet Purgatory is of the same nature with the pains of Penance, for there men compleat the expiation of their sins by enduring the pains of Purgatory, which was wanting to perfect their Penance in this World. And therefore Baptism does not remit the temporal punishment of sin, because there is none due till men sin after Baptism : it can no more remit the temporal pains of Purgatory, than the temporal pains of Penance, which none but a baptized Sinner is obnoxious to : and therefore it is false (according to their Doctrine) to say, *That Christ obtained remission from all temporal, as well as eternal pain, unless they will say, that Christ obtained remission of the pains of Penance, and then farewell Penance and Purgatory together.* And this very bottom our Jesuite sets it on, p. 75. where he tells us, *Those who say, that it were a greater mercy in God to remit all the punishment due to sin, blame Christ for Preaching Penance, and account him on that score less merciful :* which justifies what I said, that the pains of Purgatory answer the pains of Penance, and therefore this temporal punishment of sin, was not expiated by the Death of Christ no more then Penance is : and when he can prove, that Christ Preached such Penance as this, we will acknowledge Purgatory.

But to return ; I desired to know, how any man can be satisfied

fied from Scripture, that Christ by his death has delivered us from eternal punishments, if he have not delivered us from the temporal punishments of sin in the next World. For if those Texts which prove our Redemption by the Death of Christ, do not prove, that Christ has redeemed us from the whole punishment due to sin in the next World, they prove nothing, and then there is not one place of Scripture to prove, that Christ has redeemed us from eternal punishments. For if *Christ's dying for our sins, making atonement for sin, being a propitiation through faith in his blood; if remission and forgiveness of sins, being justified, having peace with God, being reconciled to God, and saved from wrath,* do not signifie taking away the punishment of sin, I desire one Text to prove, that a Sinner who is pardoned and justified shall not be eternally punished for sin: and if they do signifie taking away the punishment of sin, how can a Sinner, who is pardoned and justified be punished for his sins, so that these Scriptures either prove, that there is no Purgatory, or they cannot prove, that we shall be delivered from Hell. This Argument he slightly mentions, p. 69, but has so much wit as to say nothing to it.

I asked farther, whether there are two kinds of punishments due to sin, temporal and eternal, of such a distinct nature that the promise of forgiveness does not include both, nay that God cannot forgive both, that God can only forgive eternal punishment, but the Sinner himself must endure the temporal. If this were the case, I would grant, the promises of forgiveness could extend only to eternal punishments; but if the Curse of the Law be eternal death, and all other punishments are only parts of the Curse and a partial execution of it, then to forgive eternal punishments must include the forgiveness of temporal punishments as parts or branches of it: and this I shewed was the case here, that there is no other threatening in all the Gospel against sin, but eternal death, and therefore all other punishments are inflicted by vertue of this Law, as included in it; and consequently he who is delivered from this Curse of the Law, from eternal punishments, is delivered from the whole punishment due to sin, though not from correction and discipline, which is not properly the Curse of the Law, nor the Wrath of God. A little piece of this he cites, p. 69, but without an answer. In his following harangue: indeed for Purgatory, he endeavours to prove by some examples of God's punishing those, whose sins were forgiven, and by some Sayings of the Fathers, that after the guilt of sin is forgiven, there

remains an obligation to undergo punishment ; but these have been answered often enough, and are no Answer to the Argument of the *Preservative*, and therefore I am not concerned about them.

a Cor. 4. 18. I asked farther, why they call Purgatory, which is a place of punishment in the other World, a temporal punishment? which is an abuse of the Language of Scripture, which makes this World temporal, and the next World eternal. *The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal*: and therefore temporal punishments signify the punishments of this World, but the unseen punishments, as well as the unseen rewards, of the next World are eternal ; which is a demonstration, that there is no Purgatory, unless it be eternal. This he thus repeats, p. 69. *The things which are seen (that is, of this World) are temporal ; but the things, which are not seen (that is, of the next World) are eternal. This is a demonstration, that there is no Purgatory : which is both to conceal the force of the Argument, and to pervert it ; for he should at least have added, there is no Purgatory, unless it be eternal.* But his answer to this is extremely pleasant, p. 76. *St. Paul never taught that all things, that are not seen, or of another World, are eternal, or else God would be eternally judging, and so never rewarding his Servants, or punishing his Enemies.* But it is plain the Apostle by things that are seen, or not seen, signifies things which are to be enjoyed or suffered by us, not any transient Acts of God or Creatures ; and thus if there be any such thing as Purgatory in the other World, it must be eternal.

11 John 29, 26. To this I added ; The state of the next World is called either life or death, eternal life, or eternal death. *Those who believe in Christ shall never die.* Now I desire to know the difference between *living* and *dying* and *perishing* in the next World. For bad men do not cease to be, nor lose all sense in the next World, no more than good men ; and therefore life can only signify a state of happiness, and death a state of misery. Now if good men must not *perish*, must not *die* in the next World, they must not go to Purgatory, which is as much *perishing*, as much *dying*, as Hell, though not so long. This he thus recites, p. 69. *Who believes in Christ, shall never die ; therefore good men must not go to Purgatory, which is as much perishing and dying as Hell, but not so long.* Which you see, is still to conceal the force of the Argument, but the comfort is, he lays nothing against it, unless his repeating it must pass for a confutation. But he immediately adds,

adds, as if it were in the same period ; *otherwise Purgatory may be everlasting life for all I know, and so the pains of it eternal.* But this is several periods off. In summing up this Argument I inquired, how a Papist, who believes a Purgatory-fire, wherein he shall be tormented (God knows how long) for his sins, can prove, that a penitent sinner shall not be damned for his sins. After other proofs, which, I thought, it was reasonable for them to urge, (and I am sure they can urge no better) I alledged this in their behalf; that Christ has promised, that *those who believe in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life*: and that proves, that the pains of Purgatory cannot be for ever, for then Christ could not perform his promise of bestowing everlasting life on them: To this I answer, So I confess one would think, and so I should have thought also, that when Christ promised, that such believers should not *perish*, and should never *die*, that he meant, that such men should not go to Purgatory: but *if falling into Purgatory, he not perishing and not dying, it may be everlasting life too, for ought I know, and then the pains of Purgatory may be eternal.*

I hope the Reader is by this time sensible, how easie it is to render any Discourse ridiculous by taking half Sentences, and joyning those passages together, which have no connexion and dependence.

I observed farther, That the Doctrine of Purgatory destroys our hope and confidence in the mediation of Christ, as it represents him less merciful and compassionate or less powerful than the necessities of sinners require him to be.

1. As for his Compassion. It is no great sign of tenderness and compassion to leave his Members in Purgatory-fire, which burns as hot as Hell. *Could I believe this of our Saviour, I should have very mean thoughts of his kindness, and not much rely on him for any thing--- it is a wonderful thing to me, that when a merciful man cannot see a Beast in torment without relieving it, it should be thought consistent with the mercy and compassion of our Saviour, to see us burn in Purgatory for Years and Ages.* Part of this he repeats, and I suppose thought all the World would take it for an ill saying, and therefore leaves it, as he found it; but I shall stand to it, till he confutes it.

2. If it be not want of Compassion, it must be want of Power in our Saviour to help us:--- and if he want Power to deliver from Purgatory, I should more question his Power to deliver from Hell; for that is the harder of the two: *if his Blood could not ex-*

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A Vindication of the Second Part of

piate for the temporal punishment of sin, which the Merits of some supererogating Saints, or the Pope's Indulgencies, or the Priest's Masses can redeem us from, how could it make expiation for eternal punishment? if his interest in the Court of Heaven cannot do the less, how can it do the greater? This he calls a Misrepresentation, and truly as he has recited it, it is a very great one. P. 68. *That the Blood of Christ could not expiate for the temporal punishment of sin, which the Merits of some supererogating Saints, or the Priest's Masses, or Pope's Indulgencies can redeem us from; how then can that Blood make expiation for eternal punishment?* I say, if it cannot do one, which is the greater, much less can it do the other, which is the less; he makes me say, that it cannot do one, which is the less, and therefore cannot do the greater: This is Popish Liberty of Conscience with a witness.

From the Doctrine of Purgatory, I proceeded to the Invocation of Saints and Angels, as our Mediators; whether this does not also disparage the Grace of the Gospel, the Love of God, and of our Mediator and Advocate Jesus Christ, to penitent sinners.

Now I observed 1. with respect to God; That no man can believe, that God is so very gracious to sinners for the sake of Christ, who seeks to so many Advocates and Mediators to intercede for him with God. *To imagine, that we want any Mediator with God, but only our High-Priest, who mediates in virtue of his Sacrifice, is a reproach to the Divine Goodness.* This the Jesuite recites, but what he has to say to it, he does not tell us. I there shewed at large, that God does not want Entreaties to do good, though his Wisdom and Justice may require a Sacrifice and a High-Priest to make atonement for sin.

To prevent that obvious Objection, that God commands us to Pray for one another on Earth; I observed, that *this is not by way of Interest and Merit, as the Church of Rome pretends the Saints in Heaven Pray for us, but by Humble Supplications*, which I shewed was very reconcilable with the Wisdom and Goodness of God; from those excellent ends it serves in this World; this he calls a Misrepresentation, p. 68. but I pray why? do not they Pray to God in the Name and Merits of the Saints? are not all their Offices full of such Prayers? do they think the Saints in Heaven Pray only as humble Supplicants, when the very reason the Council of Trent gives, why they should fly to their Aid and Succors, is, that they *Reign with Christ*? do they not, as he adds, *take the*

Virgin Mary, Angels and Saints for Mediators to incline God to be good to peculiar persons? which he calls another Misrepresentation; why then do they Pray so frequently and devoutly to them? why do they tell of so many miraculous Deliverances wrought by the *Virgin Mary* in favour of her Clients, and of other Saints in favour of their Devotees? *English Protestants* know these things too well, to be imposed on at this time of day by the bawling and confidence of an ignorant Jesuite.

2. I observed, That it is not less injurious to the Love of our Saviour to fly to the Prayers and Aids of Saints and the *Virgin Mary*; as if Christ either wants interest with God, or wants kindness to us, and either will not intercede for us at all, or will not do it unless he be prevailed with by the Intercession of Saints, or the Entreaties or Commands of his Mother. And having shewed what assurance we have of the Love and Compassion of our Saviour, I added, This one would have thought should have given the greatest security to sinners of his readiness to help them. *But it seems Christ is not merciful and pitiful enough: his Virgin Mother has softer and tenderer Passions, and such an interest in him; or authority over him in the right of a Mother, (as some of them have not without blasphemy represented it) that she can have any thing of him; and thus they suppose the other Saints to be much more pitiful than Christ is, and to have interest enough to protect their Supplicants, or else it is not imaginable, why they should need or desire any other Advocates.* This he calls another Misrepresentation, and makes me say, that the Church of *Rome* professes to believe all this; but I say no such thing, but only this is the natural interpretation of their seeking other Advocates and Mediators besides Christ: when he can give a better account of this Practice, I will acknowledge, I was mistaken in my Argument, but am no Misrepresenter; for to Argue ill, and to Misrepresent, are two things, as the Representer himself, I suppose, has learnt by this time.

SECT. III.

An Answer to the Thirty Misrepresentations and Calumnies, and some Fanatical Principles said to be offered in the Third and Fourth Sections.

HERE our Jesuite foams and rages; and I will make him rage a little more, before I have done with him. For bad Spirits are apt to rage most, the more they feel the power of Exorcism,

and then there is no way to make them quiet, but to cast them out.

The *third Section* of the *Preservative* concerned the Nature of Christian Worship, what Christ has reformed in the Worship of God, and what Worship he has prescribed.

1. As for the first, I said, that Christ has taken away every thing that was merely external in Religion; not external Acts, nor the necessary external Circumstances of Worship, but such external Rites, as either by the Institution of God, or Superstition of Men, were made Acts of Religion, to render us more acceptable to God. This I shewed was agreeable to the nature of Christian Religion, which has none of those ends to serve, for which these external Rites were instituted by God under the Jewish Law, or invented by Men. For 1. There is no Expiation or Satisfaction for Sins under the Gospel, but only the Blood of Christ, and therefore there is no place now for any Expiatory Rites and Ceremonies. 2. The Gospel makes no difference between Legal Cleanness and Uncleanness, and therefore distinctions of Meats and External Washings and Purifications are now out of date. 3. Nor is there any Symbolical Presence of God under the Gospel, which puts an end to the Legal Holiness of Places and Things. 4. Nor are Material and Inanimate Things made the Recepracles of Divine Graces and Vertues, to convey them to us merely by Contact and External Applications, like some Amulets or Charms to wear in our Pockets, or hang about our Necks. 5. The Christian Religion admits of no External or Ceremonial Righteousness.--- Now this cuts off every thing, which is External in Religion at a blow, because it cuts off all hopes and relyances on an External Righteousness. 6. Hence it appears, that the Christian Religion can admit nothing, that is External, but only some Federal Rites; such as the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are.--- And such Rites as these are necessary in all instituted Religions, which depend upon free and voluntary Covenants. For since Mankind has by sin forfeited their natural right to God's favour, they can challenge nothing from him now, but by Promise and Covenant, and since such Covenants require a mutual stipulation on both sides, they must be transacted by some visible, and sensible Rites, whereby God obliges himself to us and we to him. This he calls a Fanatical Principle, but why I know not. And say, that this is destroyed by my former Principle of taking away all Rites that are Acts of Religion. This is a severe Man, who will not allow

allow me to make one Exception from a General Rule, which no man yet was ever denied ; especially when I give such a peculiar reason for the Exception, as is applicable to nothing else : that an instituted Religion is and must be founded on a Covenant, that a Covenant must be transacted by visible and sensible Rites ; for there cannot be a visible Covenant, nor a visible Church founded on this Covenant without visible and sensible Rites. And this I suppose he will think a sufficient Answer to what he says. That *on this Principle I ought to teach, that the mutual stipulation betwixt God and us must be made by his interior Graces, and our interior Worship, because God must be worshipped as a meer Spirit.* That God must be worshipped as a meer Spirit, and therefore without any external Acts of Worship I never said, much less did I assign it as my reason here against a meer external Worship, that God must be worshipped as a meer Spirit, but that the nature of the Christian Religion will not admit of such an external Worship. And yet if he can tell me, how this Stipulation or Covenant can be made betwixt God and us by interior Graces without some visible covenanting Rite, how the Christian Church, which is a visible Society distinguished from the rest of the World by a visible Covenant, can be thus visibly incorporated by interior invisible Graces, I will confess then, that there had been no need, had Christ so pleased, of any visible Sacraments.

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sid. p. 86.*

He adds, *upon whatever account that interior Covenant* (but we speak of an external visible Covenant, which requires visible Pledges and Seals) *requires a visible sensible Mark, and our actual Communion with Christ another, all the Communications of God's Graces to us, all our return of Worship and Adoration will equally admit of sensible Signs and Rites.* Let us apply this then to those Instances I gave of this external Worship, and see whether there be the same reason for that, as there is for some visible signs of a visible Covenant. The same reason and necessity, for instance, of some external Rites to expiate sin ; now the Gospel declares, there is no expiation of sin, but the Blood of Christ, that there is of Gospel Sacraments to apply the expiation of Christ's Death to us. The same necessity of external Washings and Purifications, distinction of Meats, &c. Now the Gospel has put an end to all legal Uncleanliness, as there is of Baptism to wash away our Sins, or of the Lord's Supper

to strengthen and refresh our Souls by a Spiritual feeding on the Body and Blood of Christ: the same external holiness of Places to sanctifie our Worship, now God has declared, that he has no symbolical Presence on Earth, the same necessity of material and inanimate receptacles and conveyances of Divine Graces and Vertues, the same necessity of an external and ceremonial Righteousness, which is such a contradiction to the whole design of the Gospel, as there is of the Gospel-Sacraments to receive us into Covenant, and to convey the Blessings of the Covenant to us. As for external Acts and Circumstances of Worship and Adoration, I allowed the necessity of them under the Gospel, but these are very different things from external religious Rites, and if he knows no reason, why the conveyances of Grace should rather be confined to the two Gospel-Sacraments, than to Holy Water, or *Agnus Dei's*, or the Reliques of Saints, or such other Popish Inventions, I will tell him one: because the Spirit of Grace is the Spirit of Christ, and derives his influences only to the mystical body of Christ; all our Graces are the immediate influxes of the Divine Spirit, and nothing can intitle us to the Graces of the Spirit, but being Members of Christ's Body, and there are no visible Sacraments of Union to Christ, but Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and therefore no visible Rites of conveying the Graces of the Divine Spirit to us but these. Again, As our Spiritual Life consists in our Union to Christ, so this Union makes us New Creatures, for *he that is in Christ is a New Creature*: Now there are but two things necessary to a New Creature, a new birth, and a constant supply of nourishment for its increase and growth. Baptism is our Regeneration or New Birth, whereby we are incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body, and receive the first Communications of a Divine Life from the Holy Spirit; the Lord's Supper is the constant Food and Nourishment of our Souls, wherein we receive fresh supplies of Grace, as our Natural Bodies do new Spirits from the Meat we eat. Now let any man tell me, what more is necessary to a New Creature, than to be born and to be nourished by fresh supplies of Grace, till it grow up to a perfect man in Christ Jesus: all this is done for us by Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and if all Divine Grace must be derived to us from our Union to Christ as the Members of his Body,

Body, nothing can be more congruous than that the Sacraments of our Union to Christ, should be the only visible and external Rites of conveying all supernatural Grace to us : so that unless Holy Water and Relicks, &c. be new Sacraments of our Union to Christ, they can be no Gospel conveyances of Grace ; and by the way, whoever well considers this, will think it little less than a demonstration, that there can be but two Gospel Sacraments, because there are no other visible Rites of uniting us to Christ, and consequently of conveying supernatural Grace to us, which is the Notion of a Sacrament. But to proceed,

I came to apply this Discourse to Popish Worship to see, how consistent it is with that Reformation Christ had made of the Worship of God under the Gospel. And I observed in general, that whoever only considers the vast number of Rites and Ceremonies in the Church of *Rome*, must conclude it as Ritual and Ceremonial a Religion as Judaism itself: the Ceremonies are as many, more obscure, unintelligible and useless, *more severe and intolerable than the Jewish Yoke itself, which St. Peter tells the Jews neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear.* The first part he has nothing to say to, and by his silence confesses, it to be true, and that is proof enough, that it is no Christian Worship. But he will by no means allow, that *they are as severe and as intolerable as the Jewish Yoke* : this he calls a P. 80. Misrepresentation, and looks about to see, what it should be, that is so intolerable ; he suspects I mean their Fasts in Lent, or on *Fridays* and *Saturdays*, but he is much mistaken ; I know all these are very easie and gentle things in the Church of *Rome* ; or that *Prayer and Almsdeeds* may be these terrible things. And here he comes pretty near the matter, for I look upon it very intolerable to say over so many Prayers and Masses every day without understanding one word they say, which is the daily Task of many thousand Priests, who understand no more what they say, than the People do. To part with their real Estates, many times to the great damage of their Families, out of a blind Devotion to deliver their Souls from the imaginary Flames of Purgatory, which they call Almsdeeds: to whip and macerate their Bodies (if they be so blindly devout) with severe Fasts (for men may fast severely in the Church of *Rome* if they please), with long Watchings, hard Lodging, tedious

and expensive Pilgrimages, not to cure, but to expiate their sins. He says, *If the Ceremonies used in the Liturgy, he should have said in their Mass-Book and Rituals, and Breviaries, be a burden, surely the Clergy or Religious must feel the weight of it, yet I am sure not one ever owned it.* Is he sure of this? Has he confessed all the Nuns and Monks? but if they have not owned it, Have they never felt it neither? Will he himself say this? but suppose they neither felt nor owned it, May it not be as intolerable as the Jewish Law? Did the Scribes and Pharisees, who were so fond of the Rites of *Moses*, own it to be a heavy Yoke? And yet does not *St. Peter* say it was so? Superstition will bear very heavy yokes of external Rites and Ceremonies without complaining, to be delivered from what they think a more terrible yoke of mortifying and subduing sin, but yet they are very unsupportable Yokes still to ingenuous and virtuous Minds.

Hence I proceeded to a more particular consideration of their Worship. 1. That most of their external Rites are professedly intended as expiations and satisfactions for sin. This he durst not deny, and therefore all their expiatory Rites are no part of Christian Worship, which allows no expiation for sin, but the Blood of Christ.

Secondly, Those distinctions between Meats, which the Church of *Rome* calls fasting (for a Canonical Fast is not to abstain from Food, but from such Meats as are forbid on fasting days) can be no part of Christian Worship, because the Gospel allows of no distinction between clean and unclean things, and therefore of no distinction of Meats neither; *For meat commendeth us not to God, 1 Cor. 8. 8.*

P. 80.

Here is another Mis-representation; That a *Canonical Fast* is not to abstain from Food. Does he deny this? Yes he says, *this is most false, but one Meal being allowed of on Fasting days.* A terrible Penance this! which most of our Merchants, and Citizens endure all the year round, and eat later too generally than they do on fasting days: But is there no Repast of Wine and Sweetmeats to be had at night for those who can purchase them?

I added, There is no imaginable reason, why it should be an Act of Religion, merely to abstain from Flesh, if Flesh have no legal uncleanness; and if it had, we must all have been

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Carthusians, and never eat Flesh more: for how it should be clean one day, and unclean another, is not easie to understand. This is another of his Mis-representations; for that is the word, right or wrong. He says, *I would insinuate that they Judaize.* Whereas I expressly said, that they did not Judaize, but did something more *absurd*: for they do not make such a distinction between clean and unclean Beasts, as the Law of *Moses* did, and therefore are the more absurd, in forbidding to eat Flesh, or any thing that comes of Flesh. But, he says, *when God by Jeremy praises the Rechabites for abstaining from Wine, was it because Wine was held by them to have a legal uncleanness?* No, nor is Wine Flesh. But, *Is taming of the flesh, the curbing of sensuality; no reason at all for abstinence?* And does abstinence consist merely in abstaining from Flesh? Will not good Fish and good Wine pamper the Flesh too? To place abstinence in *delectu ciborum*, as in abstaining from Flesh, is a senseless piece of Superstition: if it serve the ends of Mortification, it is well; if it be made essential to a Religious Fast, it's absurd, and no part of Christian Worship.

Thus I shewed, 3ly, that the Church of *Rome* has infinitely out-done the Jewish Law, in the Religion of holy Places, Altars, Vestments, Utensils, &c. which he passes over silently. 4ly. That they attribute divine Vertues and Powers to senseless and inanimate things, as is evident from that great Veneration they pay to Relicks, and those great Vertues they ascribe to them: from their consecrations of their *Agnus Dei's*, their *Wax-Candles*, *Oyl*, *Bells*, *Crosses*, *Images*, *Ashes*, *Holy Water*, for the health of Soul and Body, to drive away evil Spirits, to allay Storms, to heal Diseases, to pardon Venial and sometimes mortal Sins, merely by kissing or touching them, carrying them in their hands, wearing them about their necks, &c. — These things look more like Charms than Christian Worship. — Indeed they argue, that such men do not understand what Grace and Sanctification means, who think that little Images of Wax, that Candles, that Oyl, that Water and Salt, that Bells, that Crosses, can be sanctified by the Spirit of God, and convey Grace and Sanctification, by the sight, or sound, or touch, or such external applications. — He who thinks that inanimate things are capable of the Sanctification of the Spirit, or can convey this Sanctification to us by some divine and invisible effluvi-
um of Grace; may

Pag. 19.

may as well lodge Reason, and Understanding, and Will, and Passions, in senseless matter, and receive it from them again by a kiss or touch. Here are three of his thirty Misrepresentations all together; and yet the Jesuit is more tame, than the Devil is usually represented to be, when he is frighted with Holy Water. But let us hear him: *All these are Misrepresentations of our Faith, which teaches us nothing of all this.* Well, however this is pretty moderate; here is no Hectoring yet; no *Minister Oates*, and *Minister Sherlock*. *What we believe, is, that nothing can free us from the guilt of any sin, which is external, and doth not affect and change the heart.* But this is not the Question, Sir, but whether *Agnus Dei's*; Holy Water, &c. can deliver from the guilt of sin, and drive away the Devil, and work a great many Deliverances for us; whether with or without the change of heart: if they *can affect and change the heart*, that is the better way; and then they effectually convey Grace, which is the thing I said, and which he dares not deny: if they cannot forgive sin, I desire him to tell his People so, who like that better than changing the heart; and then they will purchase no more *Agnus Dei's*, nor trade in such Roman Merchandize. But they believe, *That all Creatures of God are good, and that they are sanctified by the Word of God and Prayer.* What! to forgive Sins, to give Grace, to allay Storms, to drive away Devils? Was this the Apostle's meaning in those words? Is there any word of Promise in the Gospel for this? Which is the meaning of being sanctified by the word. *Neither doth Faith teach us, that any material thing hath any other than moral connexion with Grace, either obtained for us by the Prayers of the Church, offered for us at the blessing of those things, or of those blessed Saints whom we honour, and call upon by that Veneration, or by the Sacraments, according to the Institution and Covenant of Christ; but we do not believe, that God's Grace is inherent, but in the Souls of the Faithful, or that any sin is remitted, without a due disposition in a repentant sinner.* As for the Sacraments, I have already given an account of their Vertue and Efficacy, that they are instituted signs and means of our Union to Christ, and that intitles us to the influences of the divine Grace: Whether it be a natural or moral connexion between Grace and such inanimate things, is not the Question, but it seems Grace is annexed to them;

them; which is all I affirm: But however Grace is annexed to them, the conveyance of Grace from them to the Soul, by meer external applications, as by lighting up, or carrying a consecrated Taper, by sprinkling Ashes on our heads, by sprinkling our selves with Holy Water, by wearing an *Agnus Dei*, or some Relicks about us, &c. look as if it was done, not by a moral but a natural efficacy; for what moral efficacy can such things have upon our minds? But let it be done how it will, it seems such divine Vertues and Powers are naturally or morally annexed to inanimate and senseless things, and naturally or morally conveyed from them to the Soul, by external applications, and I desire him to shew me the difference between such Observances and Pagan Charms. He has confessed enough, and as much as we could desire of him, when he adds, *Or any Vertue to be now-a-days communicated otherwise by insensible things, than it was to the woman that touched the hem of Christ's Garments,* (for Christ felt Vertue to pass from him, and therefore it was a very real Communication) *or by the handkerchiefs of St. Paul, or shadow of St. Peter:* And here were real and sensible effects, without any moral, but only natural or rather supernatural efficacy upon the Patient. And if Holy Water, and *Agnus Dei's* convey Grace at this rate, I assure you, they are very notable things. His undertaking at last to prove, *Whenever required, that they use no other blessings* (or Consecrations of such inanimate things to such spiritual purposes) *but what they find in the Records of the Primitive Church to have been ordered by the Apostles,* is bold and brave, and I here challenge him to make it good; but I hope he will produce better Records for it, than his Homily of St. *Austin* of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin.

5ly. I observed farther, that all this encouraged men to trult in an external Righteousness. For, 1. Such external Rites are very apt to degenerate into Superstition. Especially, 2. When they are recommended as very acceptable to God, as satisfactions for our sins, and meritorious of great Rewards. And this is that use they serve in the Church of Rome: *They assert the necessity of humane satisfactions; and what are these satisfactory works? Fastings, Whippings, Pilgrimages, &c. all which men may do, without the least sorrow for sin, without any true Devotion to God, without mortifying any one Lust.* To make this a

Pag. 79.

Mis-representation, he repeats it thus: *They account satisfactory works, Fastings, Acts of Penance, Prayers, Alms, though done without the least sorrow for sin, &c.* Whereas I say, they account these satisfactory works, and they may be done without the least sorrow for sin. Now are not these satisfactory works? That he dares not deny. May not all these be done, without sorrow for sin? That he dares not deny neither. And this is all I said; but then he will not allow, that they are satisfactory works, without sorrow for sin: I would to God he could persuade all the Members of his Church of the truth of this. But let me ask him one Question: Are these Acts of Penance in the Church of *Rome* intended as expressions of sorrow for sin, or as satisfactions for the punishment due to it? Are they necessary, before Absolution, to qualify men to receive the pardon of their sins, as the signs and demonstrations of a sincere repentance? or to be performed after the sin is forgiven, not to express our sorrow for sin, but to undergo the punishment of it? Are they always the voluntary choice of the sinner, as the expressions of a hearty sorrow are, or the sentence of a Judge, imposed by the Priest upon Absolution, or by the fears of Purgatory? Now if such Acts of Penance are only intended to satisfy for the punishment, I think to undergo punishment, whether with or without sorrow for sin, does satisfy for the punishment of sin: Sorrow may be necessary to Absolution; but when the guilt of sin is pardoned, if men can undergo their penance without sorrow, the satisfaction is never the less: and should he promote this Doctrine, that the works of Penance avail nothing, *unless they be done with a hearty sorrow for sin*, men would not be so easily persuaded to undergo their Penances, especially if the Priest be severe.

I observed farther, that the true reason why any thinking men are so fond of an external Righteousness, is to excuse them from true and real Holiness of Life——All men know, that in the Offices of Piety and Vertue they can never do more than is their duty; and therefore as nothing can be matter of merit, which is our duty, *So the true intention of all merits and works of Supererogation, are to supply the place of Duty, and to satisfy for their sins, or to purchase a Reward, which they have no title to by doing their duty: that is, because they do not*
 their

their duty. But then the Jesuit represents it, as if I said, *They* Pag. 81.
~~could have no reward for doing their duty, and therefore they add~~
~~works of Supererogation; which is Jesuit like: they may be re-~~
~~warded for their duty, if they would do it, though they can-~~
~~not merit by doing their duty.~~

3ly. I observed, that to make these meritorious and satis-
 factory Superstitions more easie, one man may satisfy for ano-
 ther, and communicate his Merits to him: this the Jesuit
 confidently says, is a *sham*; for each man is bound to satisfy for
 himself, fulfilling the Penances imposed on him. Now suppose that
 men are bound personally to perform those Penances which
 are imposed on them by their Priests in Confession, what I
 said was not confined to Penances imposed in Confession;
 and I presume he will grant there are other satisfactions and
 penances necessary besides these. Did he never hear of men,
 who have been hired to whip themselves for some rich and
 great sinners? to say such a number of *Ave-Maries* for them?
 If one man cannot satisfy for another, what becomes of their
 Indulgences, which are the application of the Merits of Su-
 pererogating Saints to those who need them?

Another Misrepresentation is, that I say, *They pay for Indul-* Pag. 79.
~~gences with Money, and buy Satisfaction and Merits.~~ But though
 Indulgences are not to be had without Money, it is a sad Mis-
 representation to call this *Buying*, which should only be called
Alms-deeds: but the thing is the same, let them call it what
 they will; Alms-deeds, if they will call them Alms-deeds,
 and that at a set rate and down-right Bargain, are the price of
 Indulgences and Satisfaction; and if this were the reason of
 giving Alms, were there such an express Bargain and Sale in
 the case, I am of his mind, that every Alms-giver might with as
 much justice be accused to have bought of God his Grace and Par-
 don for a sum of money.

From hence I proceeded to shew, what kind of Worship
 Christ has prescribed to his Disciples, and the general account
 we have of it. 4 John 23, 24. *But the hour cometh and now is,*
when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in
truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him: God is a spirit,
and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.
 In which description of Gospel Worship, there are three things
 included. 1. That we must worship God under the notion

A Vindication of the Second Part of

of a pure and infinite Spirit: 2. under the character of a Father. 3. With the Mind and Spirit. But he has found little here to except against, only two or three Fanatical Principles, which shall be briefly considered.

Page 85.

The first. *God being a Spirit, must not be sought for in Houses of Wood and Stone: because he must be worshipped in Spirit* (as a Spirit it should be, which differ greatly) *he must not be worshipped by any material or sensible Representations* (by material Images and Pictures) *those words except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, cut off every thing, that is external in Religion.* Here he has jumbled things together of a different nature. I shall begin with the last first, because it concerns what I have already accounted for. That the Christian Religion admits of no external nor ceremonial Righteousness: the great design of the Gospel being to make us truly good, that we may be partakers of the Divine Nature. There is nothing our Lord does more severely condemn than an external and Pharisaical Righteousness--- *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness, &c.* Now this (not these words merely, but this rejecting an external Righteousness) cuts off every thing that is external in Religion at a blow, because it cuts off all hopes and reliances on an external Righteousness, and I believe men will not be fond of such Superstitions, when they know, they will do them no good. Now what is the fault of this? *do not these Principles remit all Christians to the silent Meetings of Quakers? exclude singing of Psalms?* that is, because it excludes an external Righteousness, it excludes all external Acts of Worship. Well rhymed Father, Brains and Stairs.

Since God will be worshipped as a Spirit, he will now confine his peculiar Presence to no place, as he formerly did to the Temple at *Jerusalem*,--- for though for typical reasons he had a typical and symbolical presence under the *Jewish* dispensation, yet this was not so agreeable to his nature, who is a Spirit, and will now be worshipped as a Spirit, and *therefore must not now be sought for in Houses of Wood and Stone*: This, says he, *excludes the use of Churches rather than Barns.* That is, because God does not confine his presence to one place, because he has no symbolical presence, therefore there must be no places set apart from common uses for Religious Worship.
Thus

Thus God will be worshipped as a Spirit, and therefore not by Images, or material Representations, which are so unlike a Spirit; that is, says he not by such material Representations as singing of Psalms. Well guess't for a Jesuite!

The second Fanatical Principle is this. *God and Christ are ibid. not present in the Assemblies of Christians by a figurative and symbolical Presence: There is no symbolical Presence of God under the Gospel. Though God fills all Places, it is a great absurdity to talk of more symbolical Presences than one: for a symbolical Presence confines the unlimited Presence of God to a certain place, in order to certain ends, as to receive the Worship, that is paid to him, and to answer the Prayers, that are made to him; now to have more than one such Presence as this, is like having more Gods than one. To which he answers, to say nothing of the absurdity of this Discourse, which makes that Christian an Adorer of two Gods, who by Faith adoring God in Heaven and in his own Soul, worships him in both places. Truly he had better have said nothing, than nothing to the purpose; for is God symbolically present in Heaven, or in the Souls of Men? in Heaven he is really present, in the Souls of Men he is present by his Grace and Spirit, but in neither by Symbols and Figures of his Presence, as he was present in the Temple. But he has a terrible Argument to come. Doth not this destroy the very essence of your Sacrament, the Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper, which you own to be a symbolical Presence of Christ? but no Place nor Object of Worship: And yet though we grant the Eucharist is a Symbol and Figure of Christ's Body and Blood, it is no Symbol of Christ's bodily and personal Presence, unless it be a Symbol of Christ's bodily Presence on the Cross, for it is a Symbol only of Christ's broken Body and of his Blood shed for us; and the intention of it is not to represent Christ bodily present with us, but to be a Memorial of him in his bodily absence, and therefore it is no symbolical Presence of Christ; for the Figures and Symbols of his Body and Blood, if they be a symbolical Presence, must be the Symbols of his bodily Presence.*

His third Fanatical Principle is this. *If God be better worshipped before an Image than without one, then the Worship of God is more confined to that place, where the Image is. I cannot see, how to avoid this, whereas there is no appropriate place of Worship under the*

A Vindication of the Second Part of

the Gospel: and 'tis the same case, tho' the Image be not appropriated to any place, but carried about with us; for still the Image makes the Place of Worship. Most of these are my words, but he has transplac'd them so, as to lose the Argument. The force of the Argument is this. If the Worship of God must not be confined to any Place or symbolical Presence, then he must not be worshipped by an Image, for an Image is a representative Presence of God, or of the Saints, and Men go to Images as to Divine Presences to Worship; so that where-ever the Image is, which is a symbolical Presence, whether fixt in a Church, or carried from one place to another, it makes it a peculiar place of Worship, as having a symbolical Presence. So that the whole force of the Argument, lies upon an Image being a symbolical Presence. And this he tells us is an Argument for all Dissenters against a Liturgy, or Set-Form of Prayer, (I suppose he means the Book of the Liturgy, or Forms of Prayer) for if God be better worshipped by a Set-Form of Prayer, than without it, then the Worship of God is more confined to that place, where that Set-Form of Prayer, that Set-Liturgy is used; and 'tis the same tho' no set place be appointed for that Set-Form of Prayer. The Parallel is exact. It is so indeed, if he can prove the Common-Prayer-Book to be a symbolical Presence of God, as an Image is, but till then it is ridiculous.

At the conclusion of this Section I observed, that to worship God in Spirit, is to worship him with our Mind and Spirit. And from hence I shewed the absurdity of Praying to God in an Unknown Tongue, when neither our Understandings, nor Affections can joyn in our Prayers. For I suppose no man will say, that to pray to God or praise him in words which we do not understand, is to worship God in Spirit, unless he thinks, that a Parrot may be taught to pray in the Spirit. This he calls a Calumny. He would insinuate, that Catholics when they assist to (present he should have said at) Prayers, which they do not understand, are not commanded to pray in Spirit by devout Thoughts and pious Affections. Now I insinuate no such thing: when they are present at Prayers which they do not understand, they may have other devout thoughts for ought I know, but I say they cannot offer those Prayers to God with their understanding, which they do not understand, and in such Prayers they do not pray with the Mind and Spirit, and therefore all such

such Prayers are absurd, and contrary to the nature of Christian Worship, which is to worship God in Spirit.

But my work is not at an end yet; there are some other Misrepresentations and Calumnies, which he has picked out of the fourth *Section* of the *Preservative*, which must be considered.

The fourth *Section* concerns the reformation and improvement of *Humane Nature*, which I shewed to be the great design of the Gospel, and that particularly with respect to Knowledge and Holiness; and I examined how far the Principles and Practices of the Church of *Rome* did comply with this great Gospel Design.

1. As for Knowledge, I supposed, neither the Church of *Rome* nor any one for her would pretend that she is any great Friend to Knowledge, which is so apt to make men Hereticks. That knowing Papists are not beholden to their Church for their Knowledge, which deprives them of all the means of Knowledge; will not allow them to believe their senses, but commands them to believe Transubstantiation, which is contrary to the evidence of sense; forbids men the use of Reason in matters of Religion; suffers them not to judge for themselves, nor examine the Reasons of their Faith; and denies them the use of the Bible, which is the only means to know the revealed Will of God: and when men must neither believe their Senses, nor use their Reason, nor read the Scripture, it is easie to guess, what knowing and understanding Christians they must needs be.

Against this it may be objected, that the Church of *Rome* does instruct her Children in the true Christian Faith, though she will not allow them to read the Scriptures nor judge for themselves, which is the safer way to teach them the pure Catholick Faith without danger of Error or Heresie. To this I answered, This were something, did the Church of *Rome* take care to instruct them in all necessary Doctrines, and to teach nothing but what is true; and could such men, who thus tamely receive the dictates of the Church, be said to know and to understand their Religion: so that here were two Inquiries, 1. Whether the Church of *Rome* instructs her Children in all necessary truth, and nothing but the truth. 2. Whether she so instructs them, that they may be said to know.

P. 87.

know and understand. How far the Church of Rome is from doing the first, I said, all Christians in the World are sensible but themselves, but that is not our present Dispute. But our Jettite it seems will make it the Dispute, or it shall pass for a perfect Slander, for thus he repeats it, *they take no care to instruct men in all necessary Doctrines.* Which I did not positively affirm, but since he will have it so, I do now affirm, That *they do not instruct men in all necessary Doctrines, and that they teach them a great many false Doctrines.* But then he must remember, what I mean by *instructing*, it is not merely to teach them to repeat the Articles of their Creed, but to give them the true sense and meaning of them ; and I do affirm, and am ready to prove it, and possibly may do so, when leisure permits, that they do not rightly instruct men in the great and necessary Doctrine of forgiveness of Sins in the Name of Christ, nor in the nature of Christ's Mediation and Intercession for us, nor in the nature of Justification, or of Gospel and Obedience, but teach such Errors as overthrow the true Gospel notion of these great and necessary Doctrines.

Then as for their manner of Teaching, to require men to believe what they say merely upon the Authority of the Church, without suffering them to examine, whether such Doctrines are taught in Scripture, or to exercise their own reason and judgment about it, can make no man a knowing and understanding Christian. For no man understands his Religion, who does not in some measure know the reasons of his Faith, and judge whether they be sufficient or not ; who knows not how to distinguish between Truth and Error, who has no Rule to go by, but must take all upon trust, and the credit of his Teachers, who believes whatever he is told, and *learns his Creed as School-boys do their Grammar, without understanding it* : this is not an active, but a kind of passive knowledge : *Such men receive the impression that is made on them, as Wax does, and understand no more of the matter.* These Sayings that are marked out, are more of his Misrepresentations, which need no other Vindication, but to be shewn in their own light, and proper places.

And yet I did not deny, but some men might be so dull and stupid, as to be capable of little more than to be taught their Religion as Children, but certainly this is not the utmost

most perfection of knowledge, that any Christian must aim at : which he thus represents, *With them this is the utmost perfection of Knowledge, that any Christian must aim at.* This I did not say, but this I say, that it is the utmost perfection of Knowledge, which any man can attain to, who will be contented with the Methods of the Church of Rome, not to examine his Religion, but to take all upon the credit of the Church.

Well, How does our Jesuite confute this *heavy Charge and perfect Slander* ? Does he shew, that they teach all necessary Truths, and nothing but Truth ? Does he prove that men may be very knowing Christians without understanding the Reasons of their Faith ? Not one word of this, which alone was to his purpose ; but he says, hundreds of thousands of Religious men are employed in instructing the Ignorant, and teaching Children ; and whoever denied this, that they do teach Men and Children after their fashion ? But does this prove, that they teach them all necessary Truths, and nothing but truth ? Or that they make them ever the wiser for their teaching ? As for those ignorant Protestants he has had to deal with, if he made Converts of them, I believe they were very ignorant ; otherwise if there were Ignorance between them, it was as likely to lie on the Jesuite's side.

Having laid down this as a Principle, that one great design of the Gospel is to improve the Knowledge of Mankind, I hence inferred, 1. That to forbid People to read and meditate on the Word of God, can be no Gospel Doctrine, unless not to read the Bible be a better way to improve Knowledge than to read it. 2. This is a mighty presumption also against Transubstantiation, that it is no Gospel Doctrine, because it overthrows the very fundamental principles of Knowledge, as I shewed at large, and wonder he has not one word to say for Transubstantiation. 3. The Authority of an Infallible Judge, whom we must believe in every thing, without examining the reasons of what he affirms, nay though he teaches such Doctrines as appear to us most expressly contrary to Sense and Reason and Scripture, is no Gospel Doctrine, because it is not the way to make men wise and understanding Christians, or to suspend the exercise of Reason and Judgment, is not the way to improve Mens Knowledge ; and here I distinguish between an infallible Teacher and an infallible Judge. The

P. 87.

know and understand. How far the Church doing the first, I said, all Christians in the but themselves, but that is not our present Jettice it seems will make it the Disproportionate Slander, for thus he repeats it in all necessary Doctrines. Well, but since he will have it so, I instruct men in all necessary great many false Doctrines. I mean by instructing the Articles of the and meaning of prove it, and they do not Doctrines the nature

in the instance of this in *Moses* in Christ himself: for when Christ appeared, there was a written Law, and all the Miracles he wrought could not have proved him a true Prophet, had he contradicted the Scriptures of the old Testament. And therefore he appeals to *Moses* and the Prophets to bear testimony to his Person and Doctrine: and then Miracles gave Authority to any New Revelation he made of God's Will, when it appeared, that he had not contradicted the Old. The Law of Nature and the Law of *Moses* were the Laws of God, and God cannot contradict himself; and therefore the Doctrines of all new Prophets, even of Christ himself was to be examined, and is to be examined to this day by the Law and the Prophets; and therefore though he was certainly an infallible Teacher, yet men were to judge of his Doctrine, before they believed; and he did not require them to lay aside their Reason and Judgement, and submit to his infallible Authority without examination.

Pag. 87.

This our Jesuite makes a horrible outcry about, which has made me transcribe the whole of this Argument. He will hardly allow either the Author, or the Licensor to be Christians, and reserved this for the concluding Blow to end his Pamphlet with: *What Jesus our God blessed for ever more, even when earned the Son of God, even from us Christians, cannot exact a submission to his infallible Authority, without examining*

*winning the truth of what he says, by comparing it with the prin-
ciple of humane reason: this is the sum of all his Answer, the
caving, and senseless harangue. But the fallacy of all*

in a few words, Jesus, the Son of God blessed for evermore,

is owned the Son of Son, even by us Christians. For

own him the Son of God, no doubt will submit to

: Authority, and therefore all profess Christians

but that which I said is this, that no man could,

can own him, upon wise consideration, to be

and the Son of God; till he is satisfied, that

dicts the plain light of Nature not the Law of

here thus far we are to examine his Doctrine;

lest he contradicts no former Revelations,

Authority by Miracles, then we are to be

tions he makes upon his own Authority.

own Name, and the Name of the Li-

that when, by examining the Doctrine

the Light of Nature and the Law of Moses, I find

was contradicted neither, and by the great Miracles he

wrought, I am satisfied he is an Infallible Teacher, then I

own him for such an Infallible Teacher (or Judge if he pleases)

that I must not judge of his Doctrine (excepting the case of, the

Light of Nature and the Law of Moses) but believe it, and sub-

mit to him; and in these cases, I submit to his Infallible Autho-

rity without examination; I receive all his Dictates as Divine Or-

acles.

I do not wonder the Jesuite is so much disturbed at this, for

if it appears, that Christ himself did not pretend to be such

an Infallible Judge, as he would have us believe the Pope or

Church of Rome to be, they must for shame give up this kind

of Infallibility: and therefore if he has a mind to Confute

this Principle thoroughly, that he may understand my mind

plainly, I will reduce all to some few Propositions, which he

may try his Skill upon; when he pleases.

1. That no Prophet is to be believed in contradiction to

such plain and evident Principles of Nature; as all Mankind

agree in.

2. That the first Prophet, who appears in the World, be-

fore any revealed Law; and confirms his Authority by plain

and evident Miracles, is to be believed in every thing he says,

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while he does not contradict the plain and evident principles of natural Knowledge. And for that reason *Moses* was to be believed in every thing, which did not contradict the light of Nature, because he was the first Prophet, who made a Publick Revelation of God's Will to the World.

3. That succeeding Prophets, who confirm their Authority with Miracles, are to be believed in all new Revelations they make, which neither contradict the Light of Nature; nor any former Revelations; and therefore Christ is absolutely to be believed, when it appears, that he neither contradicted the Light of Nature, nor the Law of *Moses*.

4. When the Revelation is compleat and perfect, and has no new additions to be made to it, (as the Gospel Revelation is) how infallible soever any Teachers may be, we must believe them in nothing, which either contradicts the light of Nature, or the standing Revelation, or is not contained in the Revelation.

And this shews us, how far we are to submit our own Reason and Judgment to an infallible Teacher; that is, when we are convinced of his infallibility, we must then believe him upon his own word, but not till then. And therefore we must of necessity judge of all Prophets, till we can prove them true Prophets, and then we must believe them without judging. The Miracles *Moses* wrought were a sufficient reason to believe him to be a true Prophet, while he did not contradict the Laws of Nature, and thus far all men were to judge of him, and not to rely upon his Authority; but when by his Miracles and the agreement of his Doctrine with natural Principles, they were satisfied, he was a true Prophet, they were to judge no farther, but to receive every thing else upon his Authority.

When Christ appeared in the World, men were to judge of him, before they believed, and that not only by Miracles, and the Conformity of his Doctrine to the Light of Nature, but by his Agreement with the Law of *Moses*, which was a standing Revelation: and when by these Marks he was known to be the true *Messias*, they were to believe every thing else he said upon his own Authority.

But Christ having now given us a perfect Revelation of God's Will, to which no additions must be made; we are to believe

believe no men, how infallible soever, any further than they agree with the Gospel-Revelation, and therefore must judge for our selves both of the sense of Scripture, and the Doctrines they teach; which is a plain demonstration, that as there never was such an infallible Teacher, whom we must in all cases believe without examination, (which is what the Church of *Rome* means by an infallible Judge) for *Moses* his Doctrine was to be examined by the Light of Nature, and *Christ's* by the Light of Nature and the Law of *Moses*; so now especially can there be no such infallible Judge, because the Gospel is the entire and perfect Rule of Faith, and we must believe no man, against or beyond the Gospel-Revelation; and therefore must judge for our selves, and compare his Doctrine with the Rule; which confounds the Infallibility of the Church of *Rome*. This is the Scheme of my Principles; and now he knows, what he has to answer, when he has a mind to it.

49. I observed farther, To pretend the Scripture to be an obscure or imperfect Rule, is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, to improve and perfect Knowledge. He says nothing about the Obscurity of the Rule, as for the Imperfections of it, I observed, they pretended to supply the Defects of Scripture by Unwritten Traditions. The first Answer I gave to this, which alone he pretends to say something to, was this. If the Scriptures be an imperfect Rule, then all Christians have not a perfect Rule, because they have not the keeping of unwritten Traditions, and know not what they are, till the Church is pleased to tell them; and it seems it was a very great while before the Church thought fit to do it: for suppose all the new Articles of the Council of Trent, were unwritten Traditions, fifteen hundred Years was somewhat of the longest to have so considerable a part of the Rule of Faith concealed from the World: Which the Jesuits thus repeats; *The Catholics by unwritten Traditions, that make up a part of their Rule of Faith, mean such things as may be concealed from the World for 1500 Years, never heard of before in the Church of God, kept very privately and secretly for several Ages, and totally unwritten.* Whereas I said nothing at all of this, but that if the Twelve new Articles of Pope *Pius* his Creed in the Council of Trent, be pretended (as they do pretend) to be the Tradition of the Church, then *de facto* this Tradition was concealed for near 1500 Years, for there was no such Tradition known

A Vindication of the Second Part of

that while this distinction lasts, men have an excuse at hand for a great many sins, which they need take no care of. What! because the Church teaches, that they need not avoid venial sins? By no means! But because they shall not be damned for them, which is encouragement enough to most men to be careless about them: If they keep clear of mortal sins, they are safe, that is, as to eternal damnation; and that men may do without any great attainments in Virtue: which is certainly true, whoever teaches it, according to the Roman distinction between venial and mortal sins.

I shewed farther, that the Church of Rome makes void most of the Gospel Motives to a holy life. The second was the Holiness, and Purity, and inflexible Justice of the divine Nature, which enforces the necessity of Holiness, because a holy God cannot be reconciled to wicked men, nor forgive our sins, unless we repent and reform. But the force of this Argument is lost in the Church of Rome by the Judicial Absolution of the Priest. For they see daily the Priest does absolve them without forsaking their sins, and God must confirm the Sentence of his Ministers; and therefore they are absolved, and need not fear that God will not absolve them: Which must either destroy all sense of God's essential Holiness and Purity, and persuade them, that God can be reconciled to Sinners, while they continue in their sins; or else they must believe that God hath given power to his Priests to absolve those whom he could not have absolved himself. This he thus repeats: They teach (for this must always come in to make me a Mis-representer) that when a Priest absolves men that forsake not their sins, God must confirm the Sentence of his Minister, and therefore they are absolved; and need not fear; whence they believe that God can be reconciled to sinners, whilst they remain in their sins; and therefore they must believe that God hath given power to his Priests to absolve those whom he could not absolve himself. How unlike this is to what I said, I need not tell any man; but he has not only mis-represented my words and sense, but has made nonsense of it too, which is a little too much at once: for if they believe that God can be reconciled to sinners, while they continue in their sins, they need not believe that God had given power to the Priest to absolve those whom he could not absolve himself, that is, unreformed sinners; for if God can be reconciled to such men, who continue in their sins, he may absolve them too, as well as the Priest.

But,

But I must not part with this point thus. I said, that *de facto* men saw that they are every day, or as oft as they please to go to confession, absolved by the Priest without forsaking their sins; is not this true? That they are taught that God confirms the Sentence of his Ministers, and when they are forgiven by the Priest, they are forgiven by God: That the Priest is a Judge and absolves as a Judge, by a true judicial, not a meer declarative power: Is not this true? And is not this reason enough for them to believe that when they are absolved by the Priest, without forsaking their sins, they are absolved by God? And does not this destroy that Argument from the holiness and justice of God, that he will not forgive our sins, unless we forsake them? But he says, *They teach, that to receive absolution without a real forsaking of our sins, in lieu of forgiveness of them, adds a heinous Sacrilege.* But how do they teach this, by words or actions? Their actions teach quite otherwise, for they absolve men over and over, who do not forsake their sins, though they know that they do not; and if such Absolutions do not avail to the forgiveness of sins, what greater security is there in the Popish judicial, than in the Protestant declarative Absolution? Nay, why do they cheat people out of their Souls, and lull them into security by such void Absolutions? Nor do their words teach any necessity of mens forsaking sin, to make their Absolution valid: Contrition is the most that is required to Absolution. Now suppose Contrition signifie a sorrow for sin, and a resolution to forsake it; yet Contrition is not forsaking sin, is not holiness of life; and if Absolution upon Contrition puts men into a state of salvation, then men may be saved by the Sacrament of Penance, without an actual forsaking of sin; for if they sin again, it is only repeating the same Remedy, the Sacrament of Penance, with the Absolution of the Priest, will restore them to the favour of God, and a state of salvation again. Which shows that the Church of Rome does not teach what he pretends; I wish she did, or that he would teach it for her, that the Absolution of the Priest will avail no man who does not actually forsake his sins, and reform his life, and then we should see what value men would have for their Judicial Absolution.

A third Gospel-Motive to Holiness, is the Death and Sacrifice

been to the most profligate Villains, which I suppose are related for this purpose to make such Wretches great Devotees of the Virgin.

What he says, *That the blessed Saints only join their Prayers to ours to obtain mercy of Christ*, is nothing to our present purpose: the Question is, Why those who have so merciful and compassionate an High-Priest, should make such frequent Addresses to other Advocates, if they did not hope to find them more pitiful and compassionate; to obtain that for them of their Saviour by their Interest and Intercession, which good men know, they may have of Christ for asking, without applying to other Advocates.

A Fifth-Gospel Motive to a Holy Life is the hope of Heaven and the fear of Hell; but *then the terror of Hell is mightily abated by the Doctrine of Purgatory, for though Purgatory be a terrible place, yet it is not eternal; — especially considering how many easy ways there are for men to get out of Purgatory: those who can buy Indulgencies, while they live, or Masses for their Souls, when they die, need not lie long there, if the Bishops are not out in their reckoning.*

Page 83.

Here he finds three Columns: The first, *That Catholics exempt Sinners from Hell, who in the Protestant Doctrine would be condemned to it. No unrepented mortal sin is lodged in Purgatory, or escapes Hell.* Now I confess, though I did not say so, yet I think they do; and I grant it is a true consequence of my Argument: That all impenitent Sinners shall go to Hell, we both agree; but then we make the reformation of our lives essential to repentance, and how sorrowful *fewer men are* for their sins, if they live after such sorrow and do not reform their lives, they shall go to Hell. In the Church of Rome, at most contrition or sorrow for sin is all that is necessary to Absolution, and that keeps them out of Hell, and such men must expiate their sins by Penance in this World, or in Purgatory in the next, but though they do not reform their sins, if they be contrite and absolved again, they are restored to a state of Grace again, and so *totius quietas*. Now such Penitents as are sorry for their sins, but do not reform them, are condemned to Hell in the Protestant Church; and only to Purgatory in the Church of Rome: and therefore the First is

no

no Calumny. The Second is, *That Indulgencies may be bought for Money*, this is no Calumny as I have already shewn, or avail a Soul undiſpoſed to receive the benefit of them, through want of contrition, the guilt of ſin not being before remitted. This I never ſaid, and therefore is no Calumny of mine. The third, *That Maſſes ſaid for any Soul in Purgatory avail ſuch as during life have not deſerved and merited that mercy*. This I take to be nonſenſe according to the Doctrines of their own Church. For certainly thoſe Souls who have merited to get into Purgatory, have merit enough to receive the benefit of Maſſes.

Another Goſpel-Motive to Holineſs are the Examples of Good Men, but in the Church of Rome the extraordinary Vertues of great and meritorious Saints are not ſo much for imitation as for a ſtock of Merits. The more Saints they have, the leſs need is there for other men to be Saints, unleſs they have a mind to it, becauſe there is a greater treaſure of Merits to relieve thoſe who have none of their own — and if one man can merit for twenty, there is no need there ſhould be above one in twenty good. Here he quibbles upon the different acception of Merit, as it relates to a reward, or as it expiates the puniſhment of ſin. In the firſt ſenſe he ſays Merit is perſonal, not communicative; but if it be communicative in the ſecond ſenſe, that one man may be delivered from puniſhments by the Merits of another, (and if it be not, there is an end of the gainful trade of Indulgencies): that is ſufficient to my Argument, and will ſatiate moſt ſinners, who are not concerned about degrees of glory, if they can eſcape puniſhment.

Laſtly I ſhewed, that the Goſpel-Means and Instruments of Holineſs, do not eſcape much better in the Church of Rome; among others I inſtanced in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which beſides thoſe ſupernatural concomitants of Grace, which are annexed to it by our Saviour's Inſtitution, is a great Moral Instrument of Holineſs — but in the Church of Rome this admirable Sacrament is turned into a dumb ſhew, which no body can be edified with, or into a ſacrifice for the living and the dead, which expiates ſin and ſerves inſtead of a holy life. Here he ſays, there are three crying Calumnies. 1. That the Sacrament amongſt them is nothing but a ſhew or a ſacrifice, whereas they very often receive it; and did I ſay the Sacrament was never

A Vindication of the Second Part of

him for not wearying his Readers with a dull prolixity. But the Prefacer pointed him to the Book, and that was enough, unless he would have had him transcribe the Book again, and concluded every entire Argument, with *this is not Answered by the Jesuite*. For I know not any one paragraph, that he has pretended to answer, though some single sayings he has nibbled at, and little pieces of Argument, as appears from this Vindication, and that so *dully* too, that there was no need of more prolixity to tire his Readers. Our Author little thinks, how he exposes his Reputation among our people by such vain brags as these: They can find a great many Arguments, which he has not meddled with, and therefore conclude the Jesuite to be very blind, or very impudent in pretending to have answered all he could find, or (which it may be is the truth of the case) that he was not trusted to read the *Preservative*, but had some sayings picked out for him to answer, and he mistook them for the whole.

4ly, That when he talks big of Calumnies and Misrepresentation, he would not only say but prove them to be so: that is, that I attribute any Doctrines to them, which are not taught by their own Councils and Doctors, or impute such Practices to them, as they are not guilty of: for this Cry of Misrepresenting is grown so familiar now, and that Charge has been so often basted of late, that our People will not take his Word for it, nor allow every Argument he cannot Answer, to pass for a Misrepresentation.

5ly, I would advise him to have a care, that he do not Confute his own Church, while he is zealous to Confute his Adversary; this often happens, and has done so to him in this very Dispute: especially in his Talk of Moral Infallibility, which has effectually given up the *Roman* pretences to Infallibility, as I have shewn above.

6ly, If he resolves to Write again; I desire him to take but any one Chapter or Section in the *Preservative*, and try his skill on it; not to pick out a single Saying or two, but to Answer the whole Series of Arguments, as they lie there; and

the Preservative against **POPEERY.**

111

if he can make any work of it, I promise him a very grave and modest Reply.

But if he skips about from one Page to another, and only hunts for Calumnies and Misrepresentations as he calls them, which he first artificially makes, by changing Words and Periods, and joyning Sentences, which have no relation to each other, and then triumphs over his own Creatures, I shall leave him to be answered and chastized by any Footman, who pleases to undertake him; and I with the next may not be so much his Over-match, as the first was.

I have taken no Notice of his Postscript in Answer to the Preface to the Protestant Footman's Defence of the *Preservative*. That Author is able to Answer for himself, if he thinks fit; but I presume he looks upon that Dispute as at an end, if Disputes must ever have an end: for when all is said, that a Cause will bear, and the same Arguments and the same Answers come to be repeated over again, it is time then for a modest man to have done, and to leave the World to judge; unless Disputing be only an Art of Scolding, where the last Word is thought the Victory.

T H E E N D .



A
DISCOURSE

Wherein is held forth

The Opposition of the DOCTRINE,
WORSHIP, and PRACTICES

OF THE

Roman Church,

To the NATURE, DESIGNS, and
CHARACTERS of the
Christian Faith.

By GILBERT BURNET, D. D.

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CONTENTS
OF
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Of the Doctrine, Worship, and Practices of the Roman Church, &c.

H E that increaseth Knowledge, increaseth Sorrow, is an Observation which holdeth true of no part of Knowledge, so much as of the Knowledge of Mankind: It is some relief to him, who knows nothing of foreign Wickedness, to hope there are other Nations wherein Vertue is honoured; and Religion is in esteem, which allays his Regrets, when he sees Vice and Impiety abound in his Country; but as by travelling or reading, he enlarge his Horizon, and know Mankind better, his Regrets will grow, when he finds the whole World lies in Wickedness. It argues a cruel and inhumane Temper, to delight in beholding Scenes of Horror and Misery; and certainly none, who either honours his Maker and Redeemer, or is a lover of Mankind, can without sorrow look on, and see the Indignities done to God and his Son, Christ, and see the Esent of the humane Race triumphing over the World with such absolute Authority, and so much arranged Cruelty; and that not only in the dark Regions of it, which the Sun of Righteousness hath not yet visited with his Gospel, but that where Christ should have a Throne, Satans Seat should also be, is justly surprising and astonishing. That almost all Christendom hath fallen from their first Love, is what none whose Eyes are open deny; and it is little less evident, that the greater part of it hath made shipwreck, and dived from the Faith; and that the Church, whose Faith was once spoken of throughout the World, is now become the Mother of the Fornications of the Earth: It is true, the Scriptures warned us of a falling away, of a Mystery of Iniquity, of an Antichrist to be revealed in due time, and of a Babylonish Rome, which should bewitch the Earth with her Sorceries, but should be warned over with fair Colours and specious Pretences, so that Mystery should be on her Forehead: Being then warned of so much danger

ger to the Christian Religion, it is a necessary (though painful) enquiry to see if this *Antichrist* be yet come, or if we must look for another.

But because some have stretched the Notion of Antichristianism so far, that things harmless and innocent come within its compass; and others have so much contracted it, that they might scape free; we are to take a view of the Nature and Designs of the Christian Religion, and to conclude from that what must be Antichristianism: It being not only a bare contradiction to some branches or parts of the Gospel (for then every Error or Heresy were Antichristianism) but a Design and entire Complot, of such Opinions and Practices, as are contradictory to, and subversive of the Power and Life of Christianity: And if we find any such thing to be broached and received in the World, we may, with the least hazard of uncharitableness, pronounce it be Antichristianism; and if it be acted or animated by any Head, he may be concluded Antichrist.

The Designs of the Christian Religion run betwixt these four Heads: The first is, to give us right apprehensions of the Nature and Attributes of God, that we may conceive aright of him, and adore him suitably to his Nature, and according to his Will, and thereby be admitted to a free converse with him, and become partakers of the Divine Nature. How little of God was known by the twinkling's of Nature's Light, even to the better and wiser part of the World, *Tully's* Books of the Nature of the Gods do sufficiently inform us? But if the Philosophers were so much to lock in it, what shall we expect from the Vulgar? And indeed *Homer's Iliads*, and *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, were wretched Systems of Divinity; and yet such, and such-like, were the Sentiments of the Nations about the Godhead. It is true, the Seed of *Abraham* were delivered from that Darkness, and knew God by his Name *Jehovah*, and had Laws and Ordinances given them by God; yet their Worship was so carnal, and did so strike upon, and affect the Senses, that we will be soon satisfied, it was not so sublime and free as became the Spirituality of the Divine Nature, and so was only fitted for the Infancy of the People of God; but by Christ the Mystery that lay hid from Ages and Generations, was revealed; for he declared the Father, and revealed him, and taught us to renounce Idols and Vanities, and to serve the living God, commanding all Men every where to repent, the Times of Ignorance wherein
God

God winked at Idolatry, being then over. That so Mankind being *God's Off spring, might feel after him,* and not worship him any more in the bawling grossness of Idolatry, but in a pure spiritual manner; and whereas *the Law came by Moses, by Christ came Grace and Truth.* Grace, in opposition to the Severity of the Law; and Truth, as opposed (not to Fallhood) but to the Figures and Shadows of *Moses his Law;* and therefore God is to be worshipped in Spirit and Truth, in opposition to the Carnal Ordinances, and Typical Rites, which shadowed out the Truth in the Law.

The second Branch of the Christian Religion is, to hold forth the Method of Man's Reconciliation with his Maker. For the Sense of all Mankind agrees in this, that Sin is an Indignity done God, which deserveth Punishment, and cannot be expiated by any Service Man can do: It was therefore necessary there should be a mean found for encouraging Sinners to imbrace a Religious Life; of which all had reason to despair, without Pardon were offered to Penitents, upon the change of their Lives. Now this was that the Heathen could not dream how to procure: It is true, the Jews had Sacrifices for expiating of Sin, but these could never quiet their Consciences, since the common Sense of Mankind tells, that the Blood of Beasts cannot appease God. The Mystery therefore of the Reconciliation of Sinners to God, is the proper Character of the Christian Religion: which holds forth to us how the *Eternal Word* was made Man, and endured unspeakable Sufferings for the Sins of Men, even to the Death of the Cross; and was raised up by God, and carried to Heaven, where he is vested with all Power and Authority, and by the Merits of his Death hath a right to grant Pardon, give Grace, and confer Eternal Life on all that believe on him; by whom God conveys all things to us, and through whom we are to offer up all our Worship to God, he being the *Mediator betwixt God and Man.*

The third Head of the Christian Religion is, to teach the perfectest, clearest, and most Divine Rules, for advancing of the Souls of Men to the highest perfection of their Natures. It is true, noble pieces of Morality were acknowledged and taught by the Heathen Philosophers: and the Books of the Old Testament have the Doctrine of Vertue, Purity, Humility and Meekness laid open very fully: but without derogating from these, it must be acknowledged, that as the Doctrine of Christianity, teacheth all these Precepts with clearer Rules, and fuller Directions;

revelations; so they were in it recommended by the example of its Author, backed with the strongest Motives; and enforced with the greatest Arguments. In these are the Lessons of Purity, Chastity, Ingenuity, Humility, Meekness, Patience; and Generosity; so clearly laid down, and so fully evinced, that no Man, who is so much a Man as to love these things whereby his Mind may be improved, to all that is truly great and noble; but must be enamoured of the Christian Religion, as soon as he is taught it.

The fourth Design of Religion is, to unite Mankind in the closest Bonds of Peace, Friendship, and Charity, which it doth not only by the Rules prescribed for the tempering our Passions, forgiving of Injuries, and loving our Enemies, and by the Doctrine of Obedience to those in Authority over us; but likewise by associating us into one Body, called the *Church*, wherein we are to worship God jointly; and to be coupled in one by the use of the Sacraments, which are the Ligaments of the Body.

Having thus viewed the great designs of the Christian Religion in the several Branches and Parts thereof, I shall add to this, the main distinguishing *Characters* of our Religion, which are also four.

The first its *its verity*; that it is not founded on the fancies of Persons concerned, nor on the reveries of Dotards, nor received with a blind credulity, being founded on the Authority of the great God, which appeared visibly in those that published it, chiefly in the Person of *Jesus Christ*, who by his Miracles that were wrought in the sight of all the People; even his Enemies looking on, and not being able to deny them; but chiefly by his Resurrection from the Dead, was declared to be the Son of God, which was seen and known by many, who followed not cunningly devised Fables, but were the Eye-witnesses of his Majesty, who went in his Name; and published it to the World, confirming it by Miracles and mighty Wonders, attesting it, notwithstanding of all the Persecutions they met with, most of them confirming it with their Blood: And this Doctrine was received and believed by the better part of Mankind, though it being contrary to all the Interests of the flesh, whose mortification it teacheth, its reception cannot be imputed to credulity or interest.

The second *Character* of our Religion is, its *genuine simplicity* and *perspicuity*, that all its Doctrines and Rules are clearly and distinctly

distinctly held out to us, not like the Heathen Divinity, much whereof lay in dark *Oracles* in the Books of the *Sybils*, and in other pretended *Mysteries*, which none but the Priests might handle and expound. The *Jewish Religion* was also veiled with Types and Figures, so that it was not easie to see the Substance and Truth through all these foldings and shadows. But the Glory of the *Christian Religion*, as to this particular, is nobly laid out by St. Paul, in these words, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open face, as in a glass, beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

The third Character is, the *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, it containing none of these absurd incredible things, which abounded among the Heathens; nor of these Rites of Judaism, the Reasons whereof, besides the Will of God in enjoining them, could not be assigned; but both the Doctrines and Precepts of the Christian Religion are fitted for Mankind, and so congenial to his Nature, that they well deserve the designation of *reasonable Service*, or rational Worship, God having made our Souls and them of a piece.

And the fourth Character of our Religion is, its easiness; *Christ's Yoke is easy, and his Burden light, Mat. 11. 30.* Wherein we are freed from all the barbarous and cruel Rites of *Gentilism*, and from the oppressive Bondage of *Judaism, which was a Law of Ordinances, and a Yoke that our Fathers were not able to bear*; but that we are called to by Christ, is so simple, so easy, and so plain, that well may we say, *his Commandments are not grievous, 1 Joh. 5. 3.*

Having given this hint of the Design and Characters of the Christian Religion, I hold it not necessary to dwell on a further deduction of those Generals into more particular Branches, nor to make this *Scheme* of Religion good by any longer Proof, the Position I have laid down, being so obvious to the Reason of every considering Person; wherefore I go on to examine if there be any such *System* of Doctrins or Opinions, among Pretenders to Christianity, which tends to the overthrowing and enervating of this whole Design, and whose Characters are directly opposite to these I have mentioned; and the less avowed, and the more disguised that Society be, as it is more likely to prevail, since Error and Vice are not so formidable in their own colours, as when

valled with the pretences of Truth and Vertue, so it will better agree with that great Character the Prophecies give of this defection, that it was a *Mystery*, and had *Mystery on its Fore-head*, Rev. 17. 15.

And here remains the sad part of my Discourse, for what lover of Mankind can with pleasure either satisfy his own Reason, or convince the Judgment of others, in a Matter the issue whereof is to prove so great a part of the Christian Societies to be *Antichristian* and adulterate; and certainly if my love to Truth, and the honour of my Redeemer and his Gospel, and by consequence a zeal for Souls, did not engage me to this Search, I could easily quit the Task, and chuse more easy and pleasant Subjects for the exercise of my Thoughts; but the Wisdom of God having declared it a part of Wisdom to observe the Characters of the *Antichristian Beast*, I therefore, though not without pain, engage in the survey of it.

And first, in the entry it will be a bad Omen, of no good to be expected from any Society that shall study to keep her Members in Ignorance, and to bar them the study of the *Holy Scriptures*, which being the Revelation of the whole Counsel of God, and written by plain and simple Men, and at first directed to the use of the rude illiterate Vulgar, for teaching them the Mysteries of Godliness, and the Path of Life; it is a shrewd indication, that if any studied to hide this Light under a Candlestick, and to keep it in an unknown Tongue, or forbid the Body of *Christians* the use of it, (though its native tendency be to enlighten the Understanding, and to enflame the Will, it being given out by God for that end) that those must be conscious to themselves of great deformity to that Rule, and apprehend, that if it were more known, their Doctrin would be less believed, especially since the hardest part of the Scriptures are the Writings of the Old Testament: And yet these were communicated to all of that Dispensation, who were commanded by Christ to search them, and who did educate their Children in them, continuing that Holy care to a high degree, even to this Day. Now except it be said, that it is fitter all be kept under Darkness in the new Dispensation, than was in the Old, no account can be given, for the Zeal is used in any Church, to keep their Children in such ignorance; and yet this is a part of the distinguishing Characters of the new Dispensation from the Old, that Light hath appeared in it. Now all
may

may know how guilty those of *Rome* are in this : What pains are taken to detract from the Authority of the Scriptures ? how they quarrel ? sometimes its Darkness, sometimes its Ambiguoufness, sometimes the genuineness of its Originals, and always complain of its being too much perused, and therefore let as little of it be put in vulgar Tongues as can be ; read it publickly in an unknown Tongue, and permit no private Person the use of it, without allowance from his *Confessor* : Of which, tho in some places the Reformation hath made them more liberal, yet where there is no hazard of that, they betray their aversion for the Scriptures too palpably in all their Writings and Discourses.

But now to pursue my Design more closely, I must call to mind the first Branch of the Christian Religion, which teacheth how God is to be worshipped in a pure and spiritual Way ; and see how far this is contradicted. And here I must consider the Idolatry of the *Gentiles*, which was of two kinds ; The one was, when the True God was worshipped in a false manner : The other was, when Divine Adoration was offered to those who were no Gods. Of the first I shall reckon two kinds ; the first was, when an Image or Figure was erected for representing the Deity to the Senses, and adoration offered to God through it : In which case, though perhaps the Herd did formally worship the Image, yet their *Philosophers* declared, they meant these only for exciting the Senses and Imagination, and not for being worshipped ; much less that the Deity should be conceived like unto them, as we find both in *Celsus*, *Julian*, and *Maximus Tyrius*. Now this form of Adoration, is contrary both to the Divine Essence and Command : For God must either be conceived like such an Image, or not : If like to it, then a great indignity is done the Divine Nature ; greater than if a Toad or Worm were set out as the Image of a King, to have civil Reverence paid to it ; since he is of his own Essence Incomprehensible, and Invisible, and so hath no Shape or Figure. In a word, it abases our thoughts of God, when we figure him to our selves. But if we conceive God not like such an Image, then why is it used, except to be a Snare to the Vulgar, who will be ready to think God like unto it ? And certain it is, that whatever the more refined or abstracted Wits may conceive of these Images, yet the Vulgar offer up their Adorations directly to them, and conceive God to be like unto them.

This Worship is also contrary to the Divine Precept, who made it one of the Ten Commandments, which himself delivered to his People; *Exod. 20. 4. That no graven Image, nor Likeness, should be made to be worshipped.* And the reason given, shew the Law was perpetual, *for God is ever jealous of the Glory due to him.* Now what kindred those of Rome have to this Command, may be guessed by their striking it out of their Catechisms, as if it were only an Appendix of the first: But if we read the whole Old Testament, it will furnish us with large discoveries of God's Displeasure at this kind of Worship, to which the Jews were so intractable; *but God would not give his Praise to graven Images, Isa. 42. 8.* Now here it is to be remembered, that the Jewish Dispensation was low and carnal, when compared to that to which we are called: If then this Worship was not allowed of to them, it is much less to be allowed of among Christians.

Another part of the false Worship of the Heathens was, that they believed the Deity and Divine Power was by mystical and magical ways united to some Bodies, as the Sun or Stars are; or to some Temples, and to some *Aucilia* and *Palladia*, which they believed came down from Heaven, *Acts 19. 35.* to which they held God to be present and adherent, and therefore worshipped them. And of this was the *Israelites* their worshipping the Calf in the Wilderness, *Exod. 32.* for it is clear, they looked on it as their God, who had brought them out of *Egypt*, therefore could not possibly be adoring the *Egyptian God that was an Ox*; but the Feast that was to *Jehovah*, and the *Psalms* 106. *vers. 20.* that says, *they changed their Glory into the similitude of an Ox*, do shew that they worshipped the True God, though in a false manner. Neither is it to be imagined, that *Aaron* the Prophet and Saint of the Lord, though very guilty in this Matter, could for all that be so criminal, as to make a false God: But the most satisfying account of his Fault is, that when he saw God in the Mount, *Exod. 24. 10.* God appeared in that Figure that was afterwards in the most Holy Place, which was to be framed after the Pattern seen in the Mount. And if so, then God appeared between the Cherubims: now the Figure of a Cherub, was the same with that of a Calf in its hinder parts, *Ezek. 1. 7.* And if we compare *vers. 10.* of that *Chap.* with *Ezek. 10. 14.* what in the first place is called the Face of an Ox, is in the second called the Face of a Cherub,

Cherub, which tells us clearly what was the Figure of the Cherub. And therefore *Aaron* seeing the People desired a sensible Symbol of God's Presence among them, he made choice of that he had seen in the Mount about the Divine Glory; and yet all that did not excuse his Fault in the sight of God.

In like manner, after the Tabernacle and Temple were set up, wherein were the Cherubims, when *Jeroboam* revolted, he set up *Calves*, 1 King. 12. 28, 29. as is probable upon the same account, but no doubt continued in all Points the Worship of the True God, as it was at *Jerusalem*, as might be proved from many Particulars; but the Sin wherewith he made *Israel* to sin, was the worshipping of the True God by a false Symbol. The like account is to be given of the Idolatry of *Gideon's Ephod*, Judg. 8. 27. And of the worshipping the *Brasen Serpent*, 2 King. 18. 4. where certainly the True God was adored, and yet the People went a whoring from him in that Worship.

And here the Title of *Whoredom*, given to Idolatry so often in the Old Testament, is to be considered; the importance whereof is, that God by covenanting with his People, is married to them, to be their God; and the conjugal Duty they owe him, is Adoration: When therefore other Creatures have any share of that bestowed on them, spiritual Whoredom is committed.

Now how sad the Application of this to the Christian Church must be, all may judge, who know how great a part of Christendom worship God by Images; and how the adored and incomprehensible Trinity is painted as an Old Man with a Child in his Arms, and a Dove over the Child's Head; tho no Man hath seen the Father at any time, John 6. 46. And the Son as God, can no more be represented by an Image, than the Father; and the Holy Ghost, though once appearing in the symbolical representation of a Dove, cannot, without Idolatry, be represented and worshipped under that Figure. Neither can any Apology be offered for this, which could not with the same Reason have cleared both Jews and Gentiles of Idolatry. And whatever more abstracted Minds may think of these Images, yet none that considers the simplicity of the Vulgar, the frailty of Man, and his inclination to apprehend all things as sensible, can doubt but that the Rabble do really conceive of God as like these Figures, and do plainly worship them. It is further to be considered, that
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though the Son of God was Man, yet as Man he is not to be worshipped ; and therefore the setting out of Figures and Statues for his Humane Nature (which on the way are no real Adumbrations, but only the Fancies of Painters) and worshipping these as the Images of the Son of God, is no less Idolatry, than to worship the Father as an Old Man.

And further, the Worship of the Mass is Idolatry, as evidently as any piece of *Gentilism* ever was : For if it be certain that Christ is not in the Hostie, which shall be afterwards made out, then to adore him as there, must be Idolatrous. Neither will it serve for excuse, to say, that Christ is truly worshipped as present ; and if he be not there, it is only a mistake about the Presence, but no Idolatry can be committed, the Worship being offered to a proper Object, who is God. But if this Apology free them of Idolatry, it will also clear those Heathens, who worshipped some Statues or Creatures, in which they conceived God was present ; so that they might have pleaded, it was the Great and True God they adored, believing him there present, as their Fathers had formerly believed. But he were very gentle to Idolaters, who upon such a Plea would clear them of that Crime. What then is to be said of that Church, that holds it the greatest piece of her Religion, to adore the Bread with the same devotion they would pay to Christ, were he visibly present ; who call the Bread *God*, carry it about in Processions, and worship it with all the Solemnity imaginable. And finally, the Worship they give the Cross, is likewise an adoring of God under a Symbol and Representation. And thus we have seen the *Parallel of Rome-Heathens, and Rome-Christian*, runs but too too just.

But the next kind of the Heathens Idolatry, was their worshipping of others beside God ; whom they held of two ranks : Some that were so pure, that they never dwelt in Bodies : Others they judged to be the Souls of deceased Men, after their Death acknowledged and honoured with Divine Honour. And this kind of Idolatry was first begun at *Babylon*, where *Ninus* made the Statue of his Father *Belus* be set up, and worshipped it : And from him all these lesser Gods were called *Belim*, or *Baalim*. Now concerning these, the *Heathens* believed that they were certain intermedial Powers that went betwixt God and Men, by whom all good things were conveyed to Mortals, by whom also all our Services were offered to the Gods. Thus the Nations had *Gods*
many,

many, and Lords many, 1 Cor. 8. 5. And these lesser *Deities*, or *Demons*, they adored, by erecting Statues to them about their burial Places, where they built Temples for them, and worshipped them. And from this Hint of *Babylon's* being the Mother of this kind of Idolatry, we may guess why the Apostacy of that City, which in *St. John's* days, *did reign over the Kingdoms of the Earth*, Rev. 17. 18. is shadowed forth under the Name of *Babylon*; to hold out, that the Corruption it was to fall into, was to be of a kind with that begun in *Babylon*; and the Character of the Whore doth likewise agree well with this.

Now if we compare with this the worship of Angels and Saints in the *Roman Church*, we shall find the parity just and exact. For after the Conversion of the *Roman Empire*, it is not to be denied, but that in order to the gaining of the *Heathen World* to a compliance with Christianity, the *Christians* did, as near as was possible, accommodate themselves to the *Heathenish Customs*: And therefore in stead of their Gods, they set up the *Demon* and *Baal-Worship*, to the Apostles and other Saints and Martyrs; which *Theodores* doth most ingenuously acknowledg to have been set in the stead of their Gods. They became afterwards so exact in the parallel, that as the *Heathens* had of these lesser Gods for every Nation, so there was a Saint appointed for every Nation: *St. Andrew* for Scotland, *St. George* for England, *St. Patrick* for Ireland, and many more for other Nations: And as every House among the *Heathens* had their household God, so every Person was taught to have a tutelary Saint and Angel. And as among the *Heathens* there were Gods for all Trades, for all Sicknells, and for every Vertue; so in Antichristianism there were Saints for every Disease, for every Profession, and for all the Graces. And as the *Heathens* built Temples for them, so did also *Babylonish Rome*. And here an odd Remark is in my way of this conformity, that the Pantheon at Rome dedicated in Augustus his time to *Cybele the Mother of the Gods*, and to all the Gods, was afterwards consecrated to the Virgin and all the Saints. And as the *Heathens* offered Prayers, made Vows, observed Days, brought Presents, used Processions in honour to these lesser Gods, and worshipped their Statues and Images; so all this by degrees crept into *Rome-Christian*, as might be branched out in more particulars than the nature of so short a Discourse will allow of. It is true, the Worship of Images came not in before the eighth Century; but after that time

time it engaged all that received it into a high degree of madness, for advancing that Heathenish piece of Worship. And shall I here tell what is known to all who have seen the forms of that Church? how you shall find their Churches all over dressed up with Images and Statues, gorgeously apparelled, and well adorned; where the poor vulgar are lying prostrate before them, saying their Devotions, and perhaps washing the feet of their Shrines with their Tears, and with great affection kissing the Hem of their Garments: And if through the tricks of the Priest, the Image seem to nod or smile on them, (which is not unfrequent) with what joy do they go away, as if some Angel had saluted them from Heaven. And here it were too long to reckon up the Abominations of this Saint-worship which are offered to the *Virgin*, with the Blasphemous Titles given her, and Prayers made to her; *as if she were more merciful and gentle to Sinners, than her blessed Son.* What shall I tell of the whole *Psalms* turned to her? The words of *Goddeſs* and *Lady*, being put in the place of *God* and *Lord*: And that from the *eleventh Century*, in which the form of the numbering their Prayers by Beads was begun, *ten go to the Virgin, for one to God.* How many more worship her, than do her Son? How many more Churches are built to her, than to her Son? And how many *Pilgrimages* are made to her Shrines and Reliques? And thus I think little doubting will remain, that the Worship of the *Baalim* begun at *Babylon*, is now set up in the *Christian Rome*.

Now how contrary this is to the Divine Nature, common reason may suggest? as also to the exaltation of the Person of Christ, *Iſa. 42. 8. God is a jealous God, and will not give his Glory to another.* We have but *one Lord Jesus Christ*, *1 Cor. 8. 6.* who by his most precious Blood shed for us, purchased the Honour of being Mediator betwixt God and Man: And therefore *Christians* ought only to make mention of his Name. Beside, the great Evil of Idolatry is, that it debases the Soul of the profane Worshipper, *for like them are all they that trust in them, Pſal. 115. 8.* It leads away the Mind from that inward, free, and spiritual Converse and Fellowship with God, to which the Gospel invites us, and carries it out into an external, sensible, and dead Religion: It stifles the Power of true Piety, making it die out in formal and stupifying Superstition: And the Plagues which Heaven pours out on those ungodly Worshipers, are heavy and great.

A black Roll of them in the end of the first Chap. to the Romans, which were the Consecratories on their not glorifying of God, as God; which is branched out into the two Kinds I have discoursed of. The first is, v. 23. *They changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, &c.* And the second is, v. 25. *Who worshipped and served the Creature more than (or besides) the Creator.* And it would raise horror in sober Minds to tell how much the Sin of the Flesh, particularly the Sin of Sodom, which is first reckoned in that dismal Catalogue, abounds with these of this Spiritual Babylon.

And will the poor distinctions of *Dulia* and *Latria* save them from this Guilt? Alas! these are parts of the Mystery by which they would veil their Abominations; but their Nakedness is not hid with this thin Vail. For we see how simply all religious Worship offered to Creatures displeased God: Neither did the Prophets tell the *Israelites* that a kind of Worship called *Dulia*, or *Service*, might be payed to Creatures, but the *Latria*, or Adoration, was only proper to God; indeed they dreamed not of this subtilty; And when St. John offered to fall down before the Angel, he warns him not to do it, as being not only his Fellow-creature, but his Fellow-servant. Revel. 19. 10. by which all that Prostration for Worship is declared unlawful; And what can be called Adoration, if to offer Prayers, to make Vows, to sing Hymns, to observe Days, and to build Churches; be not such? These nice Distinctions which the Schoolmen have devised, will serve in no stead in the great Day, when God's jealousy shall burn like Fire, against all that have dishonoured him, by this profane worshipping of Creatures. And it is certain, that however some speculative People may have distinct Notions of these kinds of Worship, yet the Vulgar, in their Practice, make no difference at all, but place all their trust in them, fly to them in their troubles as to their refuge and strong hold; whereby that Faith and Confidence which is only due to God and his Son is abated, so much of it being bestowed on Creatures. And what a baseness of Mind doth it discover, for Men, to whom God hath revealed so much of the Riches of his Grace, and hath allowed constant and free access to his Throne, with the largest encouragements and assurances of being heard and accepted by him; and who hath given Mankind's Mediator, who in the likeness of our Flesh did express the greatest and freest Love ima-

ginable, dying for us, and being now our Advocate and Intercessor with his Father ; that instead of conversing immediately with God and Christ in the Exercises of Devotion, we should betake our selves to a dead and lifeless invocating of those, of whose hearing us we can have no assurance, and in which there can be no comfort nor true joy found.

So much of the Object of Worship, the Manner of it is next to be considered : We observed before, that God called us in the Gospel to a lively and spiritual Worship ; and this was first in opposition to the Sorceries of the Gentile Worship, and next to the heavy Yoke of the Jewish Bondage. How much of Sorcery and Enchantments was used in Heathenism, every one that gives account of their Forms do mention ; but indeed all they used was nothing, if compared to the Enchantments of the Roman Church ; and first of all, Can any thing look like a Charm, than the worshipping God in an unknown Tongue ? in which the Worshipper is capable of no converse with God by these parts of Worship, which he doth not understand. Next, the muttering so large portions of the Worship, chiefly in the Office of the Mass, what doth it look like but the mumbling of Charm ? But shall I here tell of the *charming of Water, of Salt, of Wax-Candles, for driving away of Devils* ? Shall I next tell of the *christening of Bells, the hallowing of Oil, the touching of Beads, the touching of little Pebbles* ; which shall have a virtue against Sickness of all kinds, Thunders and Lightnings, and Tentations of the Devil ? Shall I next tell of the *consecrating of Roses, Agnus Des's, Medals*, and the like ? Or, shall I tell of their *Exorcisms and Charms for driving out Devils*, with all the strange Actions used in them ? Shall I mention the *Reliques*, and and all the Virtues believed to be in them, yea, and derived from them ? Shall I mention their *privileged Altars*, their *Jubilees*, the *Prayers* upon which *Indulgences* are granted, their *solemn Processions*, together with all the small Tricks are used in every part of their Worship ? All this would be endless. These Things cannot but eat out the Power of Religion, and introduce a dry and empty *Skeleton* of enchanted Actions, instead of that lively Image of God, which the Christian Religion designs to restore in us.

In a word, shall I tell how the Sacramental Actions are polluted by the superfetation of so many new Rites, whereby they are wholly changed from their original Simplicity.

In Baptism, *instead of washing with Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; how have they added so many adulterated Rites? the Child must be thrice blown upon, then a Charm used for turning the Devil out of him, he must be anointed with holy Oil, and hallowed Salt must be put in his Mouth, sanctified Garments also must be put on him, and a holy Wax-candle in his Hand, and the Priest's Spittle must be gently stroaked upon him. Whether doth all this look like the Simplicity of the Spouse of Christ, or the Attire of the Harlot?

And in the other Sacrament, a great deal more ado is made; so that any indifferent Spectator, who were not warned of it, would swear it were a solemn piece of Pageantry; the Priest must come in clothed with rich embroidered Vestments, then he goes to the Altar, sometimes reads on the one side, then he turns to the other; Often he bows, and kisses, and crosses, sometimes single, sometimes thrice repeated crosses: Most of the Office he mutters, though what he says is all alike understood, being in an unknown Tongue; Sometimes he turns to the People, and gives them a short *Barbarian* Benediction; Then he goes on till he comes to the five wonder-working Words; And then instead of the Bread, which the force of these words hath driven to nothing, behold a God, to be worshipped by the Spectators. And after the Adoration, the God is to be devoured by the Priest; which made the *Arabian* say, *He never saw a Sect of Religion so foolish as the Christians were, who with their Teeth devoured the God they had adored.*

Certainly all this looks so like a piece of Extravagance, especially if the simplicity of the first Institution be considered, that many will doubt if it be possible that such Worship can be received in any corner of the Christian World. And by these Hints, though an hundred more might be instanced, let it be guessed what is become of the simplicity of the *Christian* Religion, when it is so vitiated in all the Parts and Branches of it: And whether that genuine sincere spirituality appear in it, which the Gospel holds forth to the World? These things having a native tendency for leading away the Soul from attending upon

God, in her Acts of Worship; which is the only thing for which external Worship is to be continued in, that in it we may jointly concur to converse with our Maker. If from this I should reckon up all the Tricks are used in secret Worship, what Stories should I tell of the pattering over the Beads, of the multiplying little unintelligible Prayers, the using of Penance, some whereof are ridiculous for their gentleness, and others of them are as formidable for their horror, and sifter for the Priests of *Baal*, or the worshippers of *Dionis Taurica*, then for those that worship the living God with joy and gladness of Heart? Now by the performance of these, the simple deluded People imagine themselves reconciled to God, and secured from his Wrath: And so go about them merely in the opinion of a Charm.

But I must next shew how the multiplicity of the Jewish Rites was also brought in upon Christendom; though Christ came to set us at liberty from that *Yoke*, which was made up of Ordinances and lifeless Precepts, *that could not make the debt thereof perfect*: nothing being enjoined in the Christian Religion, but that which was of it self easy and proper for the great Design of purifying our Souls. Now such as have brought in a Yoke of Ordinances, that have no tendency to the cleansing of our Souls, but oppress us with their tyrannical burdenfomeness, being both heavy, and numerous, must be looked on as the introducers of a new *Judaism*, for oppressing the Christian World; What a heap of new superadded Forms have the High-Priests of *Rome* brought upon those who stoop to their Tyranny? And how much Sanctity do they place in them; enjoining severer Censures on the violation of these, than on the greatest Transgressions against either the Moral or Positive Laws of God? How many Holy Days have they instituted? How much distinction of Meats, of Fasting, and Abstinence? And how like are their Jubilees and Pilgrimages to the Jubilees and yearly trotting up to *Jerusalem*, which was among the *Jews*? In a word, there is not a piece of Worship about which there is not a greater appendage of vain, pompous, and withall burdensom Ceremonies, than were among the *Jews*.

Shall I here mention the five superadded Sacraments, to the two instituted by Christ, with all the Rites belonging to each of them, or recount all the Rites in their multifarious Ordinations? Shall

Shall I tell of the laying up the Bodies when dead, and of the formes of their Burials? The burning of Lamps in the clearest Day, together with the Incense that performs the Worship, which are clear pieces of antiquated Judaism. In a word, no part of the parallel holds more exactly, than that *they are zealous of the Traditions of their Fathers, whereby the Commandments of God are made of none effect; and that they honour God with their Lips, when their Hearts are far from him: And worship him in vain, teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of Men*, Matth. 15. 8, 9.

And hitherto I have discoursed upon the first limb of Antichristianism, and have discovered too evident Indications of the Contradictions is in it, to the first branch of the Design of Christianity; whereby the Worship of God is partly adulterate, and partly smothered by a heavy and trouble-some Load of useless and lifeless Performances; which must needs lead out the Soul from an inward attending on God, or free converse with him.

The second Branch of Christianity is, the holding forth that Mysterious Contrivance of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, for reconciling the World to himself, by his dear Son; whom he gave to the Death for us, and also raised up, making him both Lord, and Christ: Whose Glory and dignity is vulgarly branched out in these his three Offices, of *Prophet, Priest, and King*.

- By the first of which, he revealed the Father, and his whole Counsel to Mankind, in plain and simple Discourses, afterwards committed to writing by the faithful Eye and Ear-witnesses of his Majesty. His Prophetick Office therefore is chiefly acknowledged, in our grateful receiving these Discoveries, and our studying to adjust both our Faith and Practice to that unerring Rule. But can any thing be more contradictory to this, than to keep the knowledge of these Writings from Christians, to accuse their Darkness and Defects, and to apprehend great danger from their diligent perusal, to vilify that sacred Study, preferring the lame and lifeless Discourses of Men, to the Words of eternal Wisdom? For we must consider, that our study of the Gospel, is of the same nature with a personal following of Christ when on Earth, to see his Miracles, and hear his Doctrine; the same is also to be said of the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles. Now to bar the Vulgar from this, is to hinder them to hear and see Christ and his Apostles.

Apostles, as if that were a Privilege restricted to Church-men. What shall be then said of these, who call the *Scriptures a Nose of Wax*, the *Source of all Heresies*, a *Book written not on Design, but upon particular Emergents*; and do assert its incompleateness, unless made up by the Traditions of the Church? Is not this to add to the Words of that Book, and to accuse the faithful *Witnesses of Unfaithfulness*? But worse than all this is held by these, who will have all the Authority of the Scriptures to depend on the Church, which must be believed in the first place.

But here a great difference is to be made betwixt the Testimony of a *Witness*, and the Authority of a *Judge*; the former is not denied to the Church, and so the *Jews* had the Oracles of God committed to them; but that doth not prove the Authority of their *Sanhedrim* infallible, or superior to Scripture; and in this case more cannot be ascribed to the Christian Church, than was proper to the Jewish in our Saviour's Time. But further, if the Scripture be to be believed on the Testimony of the Church, then upon what account is the Church first believed? It cannot be said, because of any testimony in Scripture, for if it give Authority to the Scriptures, it cannot receive its Authority from their Testimony. How then shall it be proved that the Church must be believed? or must it be taken from their own word? and yet no other Reason can be given to prove the Church Infallible. For to say that they have continued in a Succession of Bishops from the Apostles days, concludes nothing, unless it be first proved that the Doctrine of the Apostles was of God; otherwise, the *Mahometan* Religion is as much to be believed, since for many Ages a Succession of Priests have believed it. Further, the Greek Churches drive up the Series of their Bishops to the Apostles Days, as well as the Roman; why then should not their Authority be likewise acknowledged infallible? In fine, must the *Vulgar* go and examine the Successions of the Bishops, and judge about all the dubious Elections, whether the Conveyance have been interrupted or not? Certainly were this to be done, it were an impossible Achievement, and harder than the study of the Originals of both Testaments: Therefore the *Vulgar* must simply believe the Authority of the Church on her own Testimony; which is the most absurd thing imaginable, and this to every Individual, will resolve into the Testimony of their Priest. Behold then a goodly Foundation for building our Faith upon!

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Christ's Prophetick Office is also invaded, by pretence of the Churches Infallibility in expounding Scriptures: for if this be granted, the whole Authority will be devolved on the Church, for by this Doctrine she may teach what she will; and were the Scripture-Evidence never so full to the contrary, yet whatever wrested Exposition she offers, though visibly contrary to the plain meaning of the words, must be believed. But with whom this Power and Authority is lodged, is not agreed to among themselves; some yielding it to the High-Priest of the Church, when in his Chair; others to the great *Sanhedrim* of *Christendom* in a *General Council*; others to both jointly: but all this is asserted without proof, for that of Christ's, *of telling the Church*, Matth. 18. 17. so often repeated by them, is meant of particular Offences, and so is restricted to the Case of Differences among Brethren, and relates not to Points of Doctrine. Besides, the Context of these Words doth clearly shew them applicable to every Parochial Church, and yet their Infallibility cannot be asserted. So it is clear, that Christ doth only speak of a Jurisdiction for quieting of Differences among the Brethren.

That of *the Gates of Hell their not prevailing against the Church*, Mat. 16. 18. proves not the Pretence of Infallibility. And indeed the Translation of that place deserves Amendment, and instead of *Hell*, that word is to be rendred *Grave*; so that the meaning of the Phrase is, Death (which is the Mouth and Gate through which we pass into the Grave, and is so used by Greek Writers) shall never prevail against the Church; that is, the Church shall never die.

Neither will that of *the Spirit of Truth leading out into all Truth*, John 16. 13. advance the Cause a whit, since that Promise relates to all Believers; and it is a part of the happiness of the new Dispensation, that all in it shall be taught of God. And the Promise of *founding the Church on St. Peter*, Matth. 16. saith as little; for suppose the Rock on whom the Church were to be built, were St. Peter himself, which I shall not much controvert; that is not peculiar unto him, since *we are all built on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*; and on the *twelve Foundations of the New Jerusalem*, are written the Names of *the twelve Apostles of the Lamb*. But what will that prove for a Series of the Bishops of Rome?

And finally, for the *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 16. 19. their being given to *St. Peter*, that saith no more, but that he was to open the Gospel, which is usually called, *the Kingdom of God*, or, *of Heaven* in the New Testament. Now the use of *Keys* being to open the Door, this was peculiar *St. Peter's* Honour, who did first publish the Gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and in particular did first receive the Gentiles into the New Dispensation. But this hath no relation to the Bishops of *Rome*, nor to the pretended Infallibility of that See.

That which hath the fairest appearance of reason is, that if there be no absolute unerring Court on Earth, for deciding of Controversies, there shall be no end of them ; but every private Man may, upon the pretence of some ill-understood place of Scripture, break the Unity of the Church, and so the Peace of the Church is in hazard of being irrecoverably lost. But how specious soever this may appear, it hath no weight in it : For it is certain, that Vice, as well as Errour, is destructive of Religion, and it will be no imputation on our Religion, that the one be no more guarded against, than the other is ; if then there be no Authority for repressing Vice, but the outward discipline of the Church ; it is not incongruous there is no other Authority for suppressing of Error, but that same of the Discipline of the Church. It is certainly a piece of Humility, for a Man to suspect his own Thoughts, when they lye cross to the Sentiments of the Guides and Leaders of the Church : But withal, a Man ought to be in all he does, *fully persuaded in his own Mind* ; and we are commanded to try the Spirits, and not to believe every Spirit, 1 Joh. 4. 1. Now Reason being the chief excellency of Man, and that wherein the Divine Image doth mainly consist, it were very absurd to deny Man a rational judging and discerning of these things wherein his eternal Interest is most concerned. Besides the Nature of Religion, it being a thing suitable to the Powers of the Soul, shews that a Man must have a conviction of the truth of it on his Mind, and that he cannot be bound in contradiction to his own apprehensions, to receive any Opinions merely upon the testimony of others.

If to confirm all this, I should add all can be brought from History for proving General Councils to have erred in Matters of Faith ; or that Popes have been Hereticks, or that they have
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been anathematized as such, by other Popes and General Councils, I should be too tedious. But in end, how shall the Vulgar know the Definitions of Councils, or the Decrees of Popes? Or must they be blindly determined by the Priest's Assertion? Certainly, this were to expose them to the greatest Hazards, since they are not suffered to found their Faith upon the Scriptures: Nor doth the Church reveal her Doctrines to them, so that their Faith must be resolved upon the bare Testimony of a Priest, who is perhaps both ignorant and licentious. And by this we may judge to what a pass the Souls of the People are brought by this Doctrine.

In a word, *We are not the Servants of Men*, nor bound to their Authority; for none can be a Judge, but where he hath Power both to try and to coerce. Now none but God can either search our Hearts, or change them; for as no Humane Power can know our Thoughts, so neither can it turn them, which are not in our own Power, much less in the Power of others; therefore our Consciences can, and must only fall within God's Jurisdiction: And since the renovation of the Image of God consists in Knowledge, and Religion designs an union of our Souls to Divine Truth, that we may freely converse with it, it will follow, that all these Pretences of absolute Authority and Infallibility in Teaching, are contrary to Christ's Prophetick Office, who came to reveal the Father to us.

The second of Jesus Christ's Offices, was the Priestly, without which the former had never been effectual; for had we known never so perfectly the Will of God, without a method had been laid down for reconciling Sinners to him, it was in vain to think of Religion, since nothing Sinners could do, was able to appease God, or expiate Sin; but this was fully done by the Sacrifice of that Lamb of God, *Who became Sin for us, and bare our Sins in his own Body; in whom we have Redemption, even forgiveness of Sin through his Blood*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Ephes. 1. 7. If then any have derogated from the value of this Satisfaction, they have offered the utmost indignity to the highest Love, and committed the Crime of the greatest Ingratitude imaginable; who would requite the most inconceivable Love with such a Sacrilegious attempt: But, how guilty are they of this, who would set the Merits and Works of Men, in an equality with the Blood

of God? as if by these we were justified, or owed our Title to Glory, to our own performances, whereas we are taught by the Oracles of God, that *by Grace we are saved, that God only hath made the difference betwixt us and others; and that he hath freely chosen us in his Son Christ Jesus*, Ephes. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 4. 7. And alas! what are we, or what is all we do, that it can pretend to the lowest degree of God's Acceptance, without he freely, both helps in it, and accept of us for it? so that when he rewards us for our Services with Eternal Life, he freely crowns his own free Gifts to us. For when we consider how great a disproportion there is betwixt our best Services and Eternal Glory, when we also remember how all our good Actions flow from the Principles of Divine Grace freely given, but withal, reflect on the great Defects and Imperfections that hang about our best Performances, we will not be able to entertain any thoughts of our meriting ought at the Hands of God. And certainly, the deeper Impressions we have, either of the Evil of Sin, or the Goodness of God; we will be further from a capacity of swelling big in our own Thoughts, or of claiming any thing on the pretensions of Justice or Debt. It is true, this Doctrine of *Merit* is so explained by some of that Church, that there remains no ground of quarrelling it; except for the Terms sake, which is indeed odious and improper, (though early used by the Ancients in an innocent sense). But many of that Church acknowledg, there can be no Obligation on God by our Works, but that which his own Promise binds upon him; which none, who believe the Truth of the Promises of the Gospel, can question: yet still we must remember that we owe all to the Love of Jesus, and nothing to our selves: which as it is the Matter of the *Hallelujahs* of glorified Saints, so should be the Subject of our daily Acknowledgments; wherefore, we must abominate every thing that may seem to detract from this. But alas! were all this Zeal, many of that Communion own for Merits and good Works, meant for the advancing a Holy and Spiritual Life, it would carry a good Apology with it, and its noble Design would very much qualify the severity of its Censure; but when these good Works, which for so many Ages were highly magnified, were the building of Churches, the enriching of Abbeys, Pilgrimages, and other trifling and voluntary pieces of Will-worship, advanced for the Secular Interests of the Church; what shall be
said

said of all that pains was used by the Monks for advancing them, but that they were willing to sell the value of the Blood and Merits of Christ, for advancing their own secular Interests, and devised Practices? Alas! how far are these from that Holiness and Sanctity, which must qualify us for the Kingdom of God, and the Inheritance of the Saints.

And to end this Matter, let me add one thing, which is most evident to all who have observed the Methods of the Directors of Consciences in that Church, that with whatever Distinctions this Matter be varnished over among them, yet the Vulgar do really imagine they buy and sell with Almighty God, by their undergoing these Laws of the Church, and Penances imposed by their Confessor: Which as it nourisheth the Life of Pride and Self-love, so it detracts from the value they ought to set on the Blood of Christ, as their only Title to Heaven and Glory.

And to this, I must add that distinction of the *temporary and eternal Punishments* Sin deserves: The latter whereof they acknowledge are removed by the Blood of Christ; but the former must be expiated by our selves, either by Sufferings in this Life, or those we must endure in *Purgatory*, unless by the Pope's Charity we be delivered from them. Now, how contrary this is to the Value we are taught to set on the Blood of Christ, all may judg. Ephes. 2. 15. & 5. 27. *By Christ Peace is made, we are reconciled to God; he represents us to the Father without spot or wrinkle.* And much more of this Nature meeting us in Scripture, declares how plenary his Satisfaction was; nothing being left undone by him, for removing the Guilt and Demerit of Sin. And what comfortable Doctrine this is, we may soon apprehend, how it takes away that Joy in God, at the approaches of Death, since there is such hazard of direful Miseries following. Now, this was no small part of the Mystery, by which the World was brought under their Dominion; and therefore great pains was taken for rooting the belief of it deep in all Mens Hearts, many Visions and Apparitions were vouched for its Proof; and all the Lives of the Saints, that were written for divers Ages, were full of such fabulous Narrations; some Souls were said to be seen standing in burning Brimstone to the Knees, some to the Middle, some to the Chin; others swimming in *Caldrons of melted Metal*, and Devils pouring the Metal down their Throats; with many such affrighting Stories.

But for all this, the Proof from Scripture was only drawn from one wrested place of the Apostle Paul, 1-Cor. 3. 12, 13, 14, 15: who saith, *That in the Day of the Lord, such as built upon the Foundation of Christ, Superstructures of Wood, Hay, and Stubble, should be saved; because they kept the Foundation, yet so as by Fire.* But this was only a proverbial form of Speech, to express the risque they run to be such, as of one that escapes out of a Fire; such proverbial Speeches being usual in Scripture, as that of the Prophet, Zeck. 3. 2. *Is not this a Brand plucked out of the Fire?* Or of the Apostle, Jude 23. *Some save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire.* And any considering Person will, at first view, see how slender a Foundation this was for the Superstructure built upon it.

But the way was contrived for preserving Souls from, or rescuing them out of Purgatory, will discover what were the Inducements of advancing the belief of it with such Zeal, which was thus framed: It is believed by that Church, that beside the Commands that necessarily oblige all Christians, there are many Counsels in the Gospel, in order to the attaining a higher pitch of Perfection, such as the Counsels of Poverty, and Chastity, or the like; and they teach, that such as did not obey these, cannot be said to have sinned; but on the other hand, those who have obeyed them, shall not want a Reward, by their so *supererrogating* beyond what was strictly bound upon them, and the Reward of them is their meriting both for themselves and others, an exemption from the Pains of Purgatory. And of all these Merits, there is a *common Treasure of the Church*, wherein for good manners sake the Merit of Christ is the chief Stock; and this is committed to the Successors of St. Peter, to whom the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are believed to be given, who can communicate of that Spiritual Treasure as they will, either for preserving Souls from Purgatory, or for delivering them out of it. This could not but work wonders for the exaltation of the Papal Dignity, when he was conceived to be honoured of God with so high a Trust. This was also made an Engin for advancing all the Papal Designs, for upon any Quarrel he had with any Prince, the Popes proclaimed a *Croisade*, promising exemption from Purgatory to all who hazarded their Lives for the Service of the Holy Church. And the contrivance of Purgatory being universally believed, this could not fail to draw great numbers about.

about his Standards. And by this means he brought most Princes into that servile subjection to him, under which they groaned for many Ages.

Another practice yet more base and fardid was, the selling of Indulgences and Pardons for Money. Certainly here was *Simon's Crime* committed by the pretended Successors of him, who had of old accused him; *that though the Gift of God might be purchased with Money*, and thereupon did cast him out of the Church. It were endless to tell the base Arts, and blasphemous Discourses of the Monks who were sent through the World to sell these Indulgences, which in the end proved fatal to that Church, since the excessive magnifying of them did first provoke *Luther* to examine their Corruptions. It is true, they will not hear of the harsh word of *selling Indulgences*, but disguise it with their giving them to such as will offer Alms to the Church; but really, this whole Contrivance is so base, so carnal, and so unlike the Spirit of Christianity, that to repeat it, is to refute it. Here was a brave Device for enriching the Church, when the making great Donations to it, was judged so effectual for delivering out of Purgatory. Who would not out of love to his Friend's Soul, if he believed him frying in these Flames, give liberally of his Goods; but much rather would a Man give all that he had for his own Security, especially when on his Death-bed he were beset with Persons who were confounding him with dismal Apprehensions, and thus trafficking with him *for the exchange of his Soul*. Hence sprung the enriching of Abbeyes and Churches; for every Religious Order hath its own peculiar Merits, which they can communicate to one of their Fraternity: If then a dying Man had gained their favour so much, that he was received into their Order, and died wrapped in one of their Frocks, then was his Soul secure from the *grim Tormentors* below. And what an endless heap of Fables had they, of Souls being on the brink, or in the midst of the Flames, and of a sudden snatched out!

But now all this Trade hath quite failed them, therefore Indulgences are fallen in their Rates, and in stead of them, there are Prayers to be used, and especially to be said before *priviledged Altars*, or at such Times, or before such Reliques, that it is no hard work for any among them to ransom the Souls of others, or to preserve their own. In a word, doth not all this debase the Spirit of true Religion, and expose it to the jealousy of Atheists,

Atheists, as if it were a Contrivance for advancing base and secular Designs. And doth it not eat out the Sense of true Piety, when the Vulgar see the Guides of Souls making such shameful Merchandise of them, and doing it with such respect of Persons, that if a Man be rich enough, he is secure ; *whereby our Lord's blessing of the Poor, and passing a Woe on the Rich, is reversed.* But above all, what indignity is by this done to the Blood of the Son of God ? And how are the People carried from their dependance on Him, and their value of His Sufferings, by these Practices !

Another Art not very remote from this, for detracting from the value of Christ's Death, and the confidence we should have in it, is, the Priestly Absolution, wherein after the Sinner hath gone over his Sins, without any sign of remorse, and told them to the Priest, he enjoins a Penance, the doing whereof, is called a *satisfaction* ; and the Vulgar do really imagine, that the undergoing the Penance, doth fully serve for appeasing God's Wrath against Sin ; but as soon as the Priest hath enjoined his Penance, without waiting that they obey it, he lays his Hand on their Head, and says, *I absolve thee* ; and after this, they judge themselves fully cleansed of Sin, and that they may receive the Sacrament, had their former Life been never so bad. It is true, the practice of the Priests in their slight Penances, and hasted Absolutions, and promiscuous allowing of all the Holy Sacrament, is condemned by many in that Church, who complain of these Abuses with much honest Zeal ; but these Complaints are so little regarded, that their Writings are condemned, and the Corruption continues unreformed. Now what can take off more from the value of the Death of Christ, than to believe it in the Power of a Priest to absolve from Sin ? All the Power of the Church being either Ministerially to declare the Absolution offered in the Gospel upon the Conditions in it, or to absolve from the scandal which any publick Trespass hath given. It was counted Blasphemy in Christ, when he said, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*, *Mat. 2. 5, 19.* of which he cleared himself, *from the Power was committed to the Son of Man on Earth, to forgive Sins* ; which shews it to be Blasphemy in all others to pretend to absolve from Sin, it being an invasion of his Prerogative.

To this I might add the Scorn put on Religion by many of the Penances enjoined for Sin, such as the abstaining from Flesh for so many Days, the pattering over so many Prayers, the repeating the *penitential Psalms*, the going to such Churches, and such Altars; with other ridiculous Observances like these, which cannot but kill the Vitals of true Religion, and lead away Souls from these earnest Applications to Jesus Christ for Pardon and Renovation. And who can have any sad Apprehensions of Sin, who is taught such an easy way of escaping Punishment?

I confess in this, as in all other parts of Religion, the Masters of that Church have so contrived things, that their Doctrines might, *according to the Fable of the Marmozet, taste pleasant in every Man's relish*: for if any be grave and melancholy, then silence, solitude, and retirement are enjoined them; if their Tempers be more fiery and sullen, severe corporal Mortifications and Disciplines are tasked on them, such as cruel and perhaps publick Whipping, or other unspeakable Austerities, with which the Lives of the modern Saints are full; but if one be of a more jolly temper, who desires Heaven at an easy rate, then some trifling Penance shall serve turn. These are a few of their Arts for diverting Souls from flying unto Jesus, as to the sure and safe Refuge from the Father's Wrath, in whom only we can find sanctuary, and whom the Father hath sent into the World to seek and save lost Sinners. Now whether the Priests in the injunction of easy Penances, and giving Absolution, do not violate the Pre-rogative of Jesus, and insensibly debauch Souls from that affectionate and grateful Duty they owe their Redeemer, into their trifling Methods and Appointments, I refer it to all who know them.

Another Opposition made to the Priestly Office of Christ is, their Conceit of the Sacrifice of the Mass, which they believe is a formal Expiation of Sins, both for the Living and Dead, who are in Purgatory: Christ once offered himself up for taking away Sin, which he did by that one Sacrifice, and this is by the *Apostle stated amongst the Differences which are betwixt the Sacrifices of Moses, which were to be daily and yearly renewed and repeated, whereas Christ offered one Sacrifice in the end of the World, so that there was no need of more*, Heb. 10. 1, 2, 3, 12, 14. Now, to imagine that the Priests going through the Office of the Mass, and his receiving

ceiving the consecrated Elements, can have a virtue to expiate the Sins of others, especially of the Dead, is a thing so contrary to the most common impressions, that it will puzzle a Man's Belief to think any can credit it. And yet this is one of the Master-pieces of the Religion of that Church. It is true, in a right sense, that Sacrament may be called a Sacrifice, as it was by the Ancients, either in general, as Prayers, Praises, and Almsheds are called so in Scripture; or as it is a Commemoration of the Sacrifice of Christ; but to imagine the Action hath an expiatory force in it, is a visible derogation from the value of Christ's Death; and all the value is in any outward Sacramental Action, can only be derived into the Soul of the Receiver, but it is absurd to think one Man's Action can be derived to another; and it clearly appears from the institution of the Lord's Supper, that its end was the joint communicating of Believers, which is perverted manifestly by the practice of these Priests, who communicate in name of the Spectators.

Finally, What a derogation is it from the Priestly Office of Christ; one Branch whereof is his Intercession, to join Saints or Angels with him in that Work, nay, and prefer *them to him*? Which will be found too true, if the Office of the Virgin, and the Prayers offered to her, be compared with those offered to her Son. Did Christ by the Merits of his Passion acquire this Honour at so dear a rate? and shall we for whom he suffered, rob him so injuriously and sacrilegiously of his Honour, and bestow it on these who are our Fellow-servants?

But having touched this in the former part of my Discourse, I advance my Enquiry to the Opposition given the Regal Office of Christ: And first, how contrary is it to the Glory wherewith even his Humane Nature and Body is resurgent in Heaven, to believe, that *five words*, muttered out by the Priest, shall have the virtue to produce his real and glorified Body, instead of the annihilated Elements of Bread and Wine, and yet under their Accidents and Appearances? This is a new and strange kind of Humiliation, if true, by which he who is now cloathed with Glory, must be every day exposed under so thick, so dark, and so contemptible a covering, as are the resemblances of Bread and Wine. What low thoughts of his Person must it breed in such Minds as are capable of believing this Contrivance?

Again, he, as King of the Church, hath given her Laws and Precepts, to whose Obedience she is obliged ; to which none can add, without they acknowledg another Head, and whose Obligation none can untie or dispense with ; for Christ's Dominion consists in this Authority he hath over our Consciences, which he hath vindicated into Liberty, by delivering us from the Bondage of Corruption. If then any pretend a Power of obtruding new Articles on our Belief, or Obligations on our Consciences, these must be confessed to be injurious to the Dignity wherewith Christ is vested. What then shall be said of him, who pretends an Authority of dispensing with, and dissolving the Obligation of Oaths, of dissolving the Wedlock-bond, of allowing the Marriage in the forbidden Degrees ? And as for their Additions to the Laws of Christ, they are innumerable. And here what I mentioned last, calls me to mind of a pretty Device, to multiply the forbidden Degrees of Marriage, yea, and add the Degrees of Spiritual Kindred, that is, of Kindred with our God-fathers or God-mothers in Baptism, which is done upon no other design, but to draw in more to the Treasure of the Church, by frequent Dispenses. If I should here reckon up all the Additions which by the Authority of that Church are made to the Laws of Christ, I should resume all that I have hitherto alledged, they being visible Additions to the Doctrine and Rules of the Gospel, and imposed with such unmerciful Cruelty, that an *Anathema* is the mildest of the Spiritual Censures they thunder against such as comply not with their Tyranny ; and a Faggot would be its civil Sanction, were the Secular Powers at their Devotion. I do not deny but there is an Authority, both in the Civil and Ecclesiastick Powers, of enjoining things indifferent, but no Authority beside Christ's can reach the Conscience. Besides, if these indifferent things swell so in their number, be vain, pompous, and useless, and be imposed without all regard to the tender Scruples of weak Consciences, they become tyrannical ; and such as do so impose them, discover their affecting a tyrannical and Lordly Dominion over Consciences ; and that they prefer their own Devices to the simpler Methods of Christ, and the plainer and easier Rules of his Gospel.

But one Instance of their abrogating the Laws of Christ is more signal, in their violating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; wherein, tho he instituted it under both kinds, and did so distribute it, with the express Command *that all should drink of it ;*

pretended, notwithstanding of that, and the the Primitive Church distributed it in both Kinds, which is confessed in their Canons, to snatch the Cup from the Laity, and engross it to the Clergy. Now it is to be considered, that the value of the Sacramental Actions flowing only from their Institution, the first Appointment should be most religiously observed in them : Besides, the universal extent of Christ's Word, *Drink ye all of it*, which was not used in the distribution of the Bread, hath a particular Mystery in it, to guard against the foreseen Corruption of that part of it ; and the reason given in the distribution of the Cup, shews, it must reach to all that need the Blood of Christ *for the remission of Sins* ; which not being restrained to the Priests, shews, that the Cup, without a direct opposition to the Mind and Command of Christ, ought not to be taken from the People ; and any that will read the goodly Reasons given for this Sacriledg, will see what a low account they have of the Commands of Christ, when upon such trifling Pretences they will violate them. And with how much cruelty they backed this Invasion of Christ's Authority, the History will declare, they beginning it with a perfidious burning of two Witnesses who opposed it at *Constance* : And occasioning so much War and Blood-shed against those who adhered to the Rule of the Gospel in this Matter, and refused to stoop to their Tyranny.

But I advance to another Invasion of Christ's Regal Authority, committed by him who pretends to be the *Universal Bishop* of the Church, and to have Authority over all Church-men ; whom he makes swear Obedience to him, and looks on them but as his Delegates : It was unluckily done of *Gregory the Great*, to be so severe on this Head, as to condemn the Title of *Universal Bishop*, as *Antichristian* : But little dream'd he in how few Years his Successor would aspire to that height of Ambition. Now by this pretence, all these Officers whom Christ hath appointed to Rule and Feed his Church, are turned out of their Authority, and made subject to him : And with how much pride he treads on his Fellow-Bishops, the Histories of many Ages do declare. It is true, at first, as being Bishop of the Imperial City, the Bishops of *Rome* were highly esteemed, but Pride and Ambition, began soon to leaven them ; yet they were for the first four Ages, looked upon, by the other Bishops, but as their Fellow-Bishops, and by the Decrees of two General Councils, the Bishops of

Constance

Constantinople were in all things, except the Precedency, made equal to them : And by the Decree of the Council of *Nice*, other Metropolitans are levelled with them. And here I must tell of a shameful Forgery of three Bishops of Rome, who, one after another, would have obtruded on the African Churches, a Decree, allowing of Appeals from them, to the Roman See, as if it had been made at *Nice*: Which they of *Africk* rejected, and upon tryal, found it to be none of the Appointments at *Nice*, but a Decree of the Council of *Sardice*.

But by degrees the Bishops of that City got up to the height they are now at ; and not content with their usurping over their Brethren and Fellow-Church-men ; their next attempt was upon Princes, who deriving their Authority from *Jesus Christ*, the King of Kings, by whom Kings do reign ; it was an Invasion of his Power to attempt against his Vice-Gerents on Earth. But the Popes made no Bones of this, for being now held *Christ's Vicars on Earth*, with other blasphemous Titles, as *Vice-God*, yea, and *Lord God*, they thought their Power was limited, as long as Kings and Emperors were not even in Temporals subject to them. And therefore from the days of Pope *Gregory* the Seventh, they pretended to a Power of deposing Princes, disposing of their Dominions to others, and dispensing with the Oaths of Fidelity their Subjects had sworn to them ; and it was easy for them to make Crowns change their Masters as they pleased : For there were always other ambitious Princes ready, for their own Ends, to invade the Dominions of these deposed Kings, upon the Pope's Warrant ; and the generality of the People were so possessed with the Pope's Power of releasing Souls from Purgatory, and from the Punishments due to Sin, that they were easily prevailed upon to follow his Thunders : And by that time the Popes had swarms of Emissaries of the begging Orders, who under shews of austere Piety, gained much reverence and esteem in the World ; and so got all subjected to the Papal Tyranny. Now, should I instance this in Particulars, I should transgress the limits of a short Discourse by a long History ; but the Lives of *Gregory* the Seventh, *Alexander* the Third, *Boniface* the Eighth, and *Julius* the Second ; to mention no more, will sufficiently convince any who will be at the pains to read them, as they are written by these who lived in that Communion. And *Matthew of Paris* will at

length inform his Reader, how much, and how often *England* smarted under this Tyranny.

And all this is so far from being denied, that it is defended & vowedly by not a few of the *Canonists* and *Jesuits*, and is a Doctrine dearly entertained in the Court of *Rome* to this day; as appeared from the late Attempt of Pope *Paul* the Fifth upon *Venice*: But the World is now a little wiser, than to be carried away by these Arts, and therefore that Pretence is laid to sleep, till haply the Beast be healed of the Wound was given it at the *Reformation*.

But I cannot leave this Particular, without my sad Rebrates, that too deep a tincture of this Spirit of Antichristianism is among many, who pretend much aversion to it; since the Doctrine of resisting Magistrates, upon colours of Religion, is so stiffly maintained, and adhered to by many, who pretend to be highly reformed, tho this be one of the Characters of the *scarlet-coloured Whore*. But thus far have we gone through the second part of Antichrist's Character, and have discovered too clear indications of a difformity to the Spirit and Truth of the *Christian Religion*, in all the Branches of the Honour and Worship due to *Jesus the only Mediator of the New Covenant*.

From this I proceed to the third part of my Enquiry, which is, the Opposition made to the great Design of Christian Religion, for elevating the Souls of Men into a participation of the *Divine Nature*, whereby the Soul being inwardly purified, and the outward Conversation regulated, the World may be restored to its *Primitive Innocence*: And Men admitted to an inward and intimate fellowship with their Maker. The first step of this Renovation, is, *Repentance*; for God commands Men every where to repent; and Repentance and Remission of Sins are always united: And this being an horreur at Sin upon the sense of its native deformity, and contrariety to the Law of God, which makes the Soul apprehend the hazard it hath incurred by it; so, as to study by all means possible to avoid it in all time coming; nothing doth prepare the mind more for Faith in Christ, and the study of a new Life, than Repentance; which must needs be previous to these. But what Devices are found to enervate this? Sins must be divided into *Venial* and *Mortal*; the former deserving only some temporal Punishment, and being easily expiated by some trifling piece of seeming

seeming Devotion, and hereby many Sins are struck out of the Penitents consideration : For who can have a great apprehension of that which is so slightly expiated ? And this may be extended to the easy Pardons, given for acknowledged mortal Sins : For he who thinks that God can be appeased for them, with the saying by rote so many Prayers, cannot possibly have deep apprehensions of their being either so displeasing to God, or so odious in themselves. But shall I to this add their asserting, that a *simple attrition, which is a sorrow flowing from the consideration of any temporal Evil, God hath brought upon the Sinner, without any regard had, either to the vileness of the Sin, or the Offence done to God by it ;* that is (I say) can suffice for justifying Sinners, and qualifying them for the Sacrament, whereby the necessity of Contrition, and Sorrow flowing from the Principle of the Love of God, is made only a high degree of Perfection, but not indispensibly necessary. In the next place ; all these Severities they enjoin for Penances, do but tend to nourish the Life of Sin, when Sinners see a Trade set up by which they can buy themselves off from the Wrath of God. To this is to be added the Doctrine of Indulgences, which is so direct an opposition to Evangelical Repentance, as if it had been contrived for dispossessing the World of the sense of it.

That which is next pressed in the Gospel for uniting the souls of Mankind to God, *is that noble ternary of Graces, Faith, Hope, and Love, by which the Soul rests in God by a holy affiance in him, believing the Truth of his Gospel, expecting the accomplishment of his Promises, waiting for the full fruition of him, and delighting in his glorious Perfections, and Excellencies.* Now how much all this is shaken by these carnal and gross Conceptions, the Roman Doctrine offers of God in their Image and Mass-worship, and by their Idolatry to Saints, is apparent ? Are they not taught to confind more in the *Virgin, or their Tutelar Saints*, than in the Holiest of all ? Doth not the fear of Purgatory damp the hopes of future blessedness ? And finally, what impious Doctrine hath been publickly licensed and printed in that Church of the degrees of the love we owe to God ? Some blasphemously teaching, *that we are not at all bound to love him*, others mincing it so, *as if they were afraid of his being too much beloved.*

In a word, there is an impiety in the Morals of some of that Church, particularly among the *Disciples of Loyola*, beyond what was

palpably violated by their Image-worship, and adoring God under sensible and external representations. The third is made void by the Pope's pretending to dispence with Oaths, and to annul their Obligation, as also by their Doctrines of *Equivocation and mental Reservations*, in all Oaths, both assertory, and promissory; besides the impious Doctrines of some Casuists, that justify the *prophaning of God's Sacred Name in rash and common swearing*. Their contempt of the fourth Precept is not denied, it being usually among them a Day of mercating, dancing, and foolish jollity: Many among them teaching, that to hear Mass that day, doth fully answer the Obligation for its observance. Their contempt of the fifth follows, upon the Doctrine of the Pope's Power, of deposing Princes, and freeing the Subjects from their Obligation to them; by which they are taught to rebel, and *resist the Ordinance of God*. Besides, their Casuists allow it as lawful to *desire the Parents Death, provided it be not out of malice to him, but out of a desire of good, to themselves; that they may enjoy their Inheritance, or be rid of their Trouble*. Yea, some of their impious Casuists say, *that Children may lawfully intend the killing of their Parents, and may disown them, and Marry without their consent*.

For the *sixth Command*, their Casuists do generally allow, to *kill in defence of Honour, Life, or Goods*, even though the hazard of losing them be not near and evident, but afar off and uncertain: And they teach, that a Man is not bound to stay till another smite him; but if he threaten him, or if he offend with his Words, or if one know that he hath a design upon his Honour, Life, or Goods, he may, with a good Conscience, prevent, and kill him. And this they extend to all sorts of Persons, both Secular and Religious; allowing it to Sons against their Fathers. And they leave it free to them to execute this by whatever means they judge most proper, whether by force, or surprize, or by the Service of others, if they dare not attempt to kill by their own Hands; which they stretch to the case of one who knows another guilty of a Crime, and intends to pursue him for it; and they allow the Guilty Person, if he know no other way of escape, to kill him who intends his Accusation, that he may thereby preserve his Life; in order to which they also allow it lawful to kill the Witnesses that may prove the Crime.

As for the *seventh Command*, modesty cannot name their polluted Doctrines about it : They barred the Clergy the lawful use of Marriage, but did allow them Concubinate ; and the publick Licenses given to base Houses in the Popes Dominions, prove that See a Mother of Fornications, even in the Letter ; the Religious Houses being likewise full of Irreligious Intanglements into a course of life, which many times they are not able to bear ; but being restrained from the *honourable Ordinance of God*, many of these Houses have proved either Nests of Filthiness, or of secret Impurities ; which it seems by the rules of Confession, and the questions their Confessors puts to them, are known to abound among them. And any that have read these, will confess, that it defiles a Chast Mind to read them ; but what must it be to ask them, especially at those of a different Sex ? Shall I also here mention the frequent dispensing with Marriages within degrees forbidden, and their as frequent dissolving of that Sacred Knot, though (*as if they had resolved on a contradiction to all the Rules of the Gospel*) they refuse to dissolve the Bond on the account of Adultery, which Christ hath made the only ground that can justify the dissolution of it ? But shall I add to this, the base Impieties, of which not only these of purple and scarlet Livery among them have been notoriously guilty, but even the Villanies of some that have worn the Triple Crown ? As I should grow too tedious, so I must needs tell things, which to a pure mind were both nauseating to write and to read. Those that have been in that Spiritual Babylon, know, that is a Sodom, even in the letter, none being more guilty of that crying Wickedness, than those that bear the character of Religious or Sacred Orders. And what shall we think of the Scarlet Fraternity, that produced a Monster that attempted Heaven it self, by writing in defence of that Impiety, which is avenged by Fire and Brimstone, and yet had no Censure passed on him for it ? Whereas for the least tincture of Calvinism or Lutheranism, he had been condemned to the Fagot. Some of them do also teach, that Fornication is not forbidden by the Laws of Nature, and only by positive Precepts, so that it may be dispensed with.

For the *eighth Command*, those profane Casuists have made such shifts for it, that none needs to be guilty of Theft ; for they teach it to be no sin to take that from another which he made no use of, but may well want ; and that in such a case, ~~he~~ who steals, is not obliged to restitution : Others of them teach, That he who stole a

great Sum, is not obliged to the restitution of the whole, but only of so much as may make the theft not notable: But they teach, that small thefts, even though often repeated, are but Venial sins, which is an excellent Doctrine for warranting Servants insensibly to purloin their Masters goods: They also teach Arts of escaping just Debts, beyond all the subtilties of false Lawyers; which the Jesuits themselves have often put in practice, and have found out Arts for justifying oppressive Usury, defrauding of Creditors, ruining of Commerce, and making Havock of our Neighbours Goods without Injustice.

For the *ninth Command*, though it be so contrary to Nature, that the worst of men count it a reproach to be charged with Falshood, and Lying, yet they have favoured it avowedly: For by their Doctrines of Equivocating and using Mental Reservations, the greatest Falsties in the World may be averred and sworn without sin: And the value they set on a strict observance of Promises, and candor in them, appeared at *Constance*, where a whole Council required *Sigismund* the Emperor, to burn *John Huss*, and *Jerom of Prague*, though he had given them his safe Conduct; for they taught him, that *Faith was not to be kept to Hereticks*. Another such like trip of one of the Popes, proved fatal both to *Ladisslaus*, and the Kingdom of Hungary, at *Varna*; where they breaking the Truce they had sworn to the Turk, upon the Popes Warrant, were signally punished for their treachery. The Doctors of the forementioned School do also teach, that he who hath born false Witness in a matter that may cost another his Life, is not bound to retract it, if that retraction may bring great evils upon him. They also propose methods for suborning Witnesses, and falsifying of Writs and Records, without any sin; and that all this may be done to defame a person with some horrid imputation, who is led as a Witness to prove any thing against one, that thereby he may be cast from witnessing.

And as for the *tenth Command*, they have struck out all the first motions of the mind to Evil, from being accounted Sins; and by their division of sins into Venial, and Mortal, they make sure enough work of this Command, that it shall not be broken mortally. It were an endless work to go and make out all these particulars, of their dissolving the Moral Law, by clear proofs: but he who desires satisfaction in that, will find it in the *Præconial Letters*, or the *Morals of the Jesuits*.

But if we pass from the Law, to the Gospel, we shall find they have made no less bones of it. We are all over the Gospel called to be heavenly-minded, to despise the World, and to set our affections on things above ; and particularly, Church-men are taught not to seek the riches, splendor and vanities of a present World ; which was most vigorously enforced by the Example of Christ and his holy Apostles. But how contrary to this is that Religion, whose great design is, the enriching and aggrandizing of the Teachers and Pastors of it, chiefly of him who pretends to be the supreme and sole Pastor ? I need not here remind the Reader, of the Trade of Indulgences, by which that Church rose to its riches and pomp ; nor need I tell what a value they set on outward actions of piety, the chief of these being the enriching of Churches, and Abbies ; and how these were commended to the World as the sure means of attaining eternal life. Shall I add to this, the visible and gross secularity and grandeur, in which the Head, and other Prelates of that Church do live ? The Head of it being in all things a temporal Prince, perpetually busied in intrigues of State, and ballancing the *Princes of Europe*, and chiefly of *Italy* ; and what base and *Simoniacal* practices abound in that Court, all who have written of it with any degrees of Ingenuity, do acknowledg, all things are venal there : Money being able to raise the basest and unworthiest to the highest promotions ; the *Cardinals* are also named either upon the Interests of Princes, and chiefly of the two great Crowns ; or to make the *Popes Nephews* have a greater stroke in the next *Conclave* ; or upon some such carnal account. And perhaps, for good manners sake, a Scholar, or a person famous for devotion, may get a red Hat, but such are always the least esteemed in the College ; all affairs being governed by the *Popes Nephews*, or the *Protectors of the Crowns*. And who shall expect that such a company of secular, ignorant, (I mean in matters of Religion) and oftentimes licentious men, should be the great *Sanhedrim*, by whose advice all that belongs to Religion must be managed ? These must be likewise the Electors of the *Pope*, when the See is vacant ; whom they chuse out of their own number, who is always elected by the prevailing Interests of one of the Crowns, or by the Faction of the former *Popes Nephews*. And what Caballings, what bespeaking of Suffrages, and what impudent *ambitus* is commonly practised in the Elections of *Popes*, is well enough known, nor

can it be denied. Now, what man of common sense, can imagine, that a Pope thus elected by Simoniack Arts, and carnal Interests, can be *Christ's Vicar on Earth*, or *have the Holy Ghost always affixed to his Chair*, that he shall never err in any of his Decrees? Truly, he that can believe this, may believe any thing that is gross and absurd. Is not the whole frame and contrivance of that Court turned so entirely Secular, that not a vestige of the Character of a Church, or of Church-men, remains? And to this, shall I add all the splendor of their Apparel, the state of their Processions, and the Ceremonies of their Coronation, and how they wear a Triple Crown? which being so well known to all whoever were at *Rome*, need not be descanted on by me. But the mention of the Crown calls me to mind of the literal accomplishment of that, of *Mystery, being on the forehead of the Wife*; since the word *Mystery*, was for a great while the Inscription on the front of their Triple Crown, though it be now altered; which being proved by others, I may not stay to make it good. From this I should descend to the Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots, and shew how secular they are become; all their design being to engross the Power, and monopolize all Riches: which contagion is also derived into the Inferiour Orders of the Clergy, who by the magnifying of their Images, Saints, and Reliques, use all the Arts they can devise for enriching of, themselves and their friends. And even those Orders that pretend to mortification, and abandoning the world, and talk of nothing but their poor and austere manner of Life, yet have possessed themselves of no small part of the Riches and glory of the World. It is true, there is a young Brotherhood among them, which though the youngest, yet hath outstripped the elder, and made them stoop to it, and serve it. And what base and sordid ways that Society hath pursued, for arriving at the highest pitch of greatness, and riches, and how successfully they have managed their designs, is sufficiently cleared, what through the Zeal of some of the honestest of that Communion, what through the envy of other emulating Orders: All these things do fully prove how unlike that Church is to the poor and pure simplicity of Christ and his Apostles, and of the first Ages of the Church.

If we further examine the Characters of Evangelical purity, we have them from the mouth of our Saviour, when he commands us to learn of him, *for he was meek and lowly in heart*; and
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he made it the distinguishing badge of his Disciples, that they loved one another. Now for humility, it is true the Head of that Church calls himself *the servant of the servants of God*; but how far such humility is from his Design, his aspiring pretences do loudly declare. All the World must stoop to him; not only must his fellow-Bishops swear obedience to him, and become his Vassals, but the Kings of the Earth must be his footstool, and all must pay him that servile homage of kissing his foot; an ambition as insolent as extravagant. His power must be magnified with the most blasphemous Titles of *his being God, our Lord God on Earth Omnipotent*; with a great deal more of such servile Adulations, offered to him from the Parasites of that Court. In a word, a great part of that Religion, when rightly considered, will be found on design contrived and abetted, for exalting him to the highest degrees of insplendour: But so many proofs of this were already upon other occasions hinted, that it is needless to go over them again; and that same leaven leavens the whole lump of their Clergy; who all pretend, that by their Ecclesiastical character they are only subject to their Head, and so enjoy an immunity from the Civil Authority, be their crimes what they may be. And an in-road on this pretence of late, from the *State of Venice*, when they seized two Churchmen that were highly guilty, drew out so much of their most holy Fathers indignation, that he thundred against them, and finding the weakness of the *spiritual sword*, resolved to try the edge of his *temporal one* upon them, in patrociny, partly of these Villains, and partly of the covetousness of the Clergy, to which the Senate had set a small limit, by a Decree; but finding they were like to prove too hard for him, *he was willing to put up his sword, rather than to kill and eat, as one of his Cardinals advised him.*

Shall I with this also tell the instances of the ambition of Cardinals, who from their first original of being Presbyters of Rome, have risen up to the height of, counting themselves the companions of Kings, and, in their habits affect a Princely splendor, but have unluckily chosen the Liveries of the whore; for they wear Scarlet as the Bishops do Purple, the foretold colours of the Whores Garments. Shall I next shew to what a height of pride the exaltation of the Priestly dignity among them hath risen? as if it were equal, nay, preferable to the condition of Princes. The Priest giving absolution, is a sure device to make his power
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be much accounted of, since he can forgive sin. The gorgeous and rich apparel they wear in worship, serves also to set off their Dignity. And what a goodly device is it, that their spittle must make one of the sacred Rites in Baptism? *Certainly that must be esteemed a marvellous holy creature, whose very excrements are so sacred.* Their engrossing the Cup to themselves from the people, was another trick for raising of their esteem: But above all things, their power of transmuting the substance of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, by uttering five words, was a marvellous device, to make all the World admire them, who can so easily, and every day work a miracle, compared to which, all the miracles of the Gospel may pass for ordinary actions. What a great piece of wonder must such a man be held to be, who can thus exercise his authority over the very person of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding of all the glory to which he is now exalted? And it was no contemptible Engine for that same design, to possess the people with a belief of the Priests offering in the Mass an expiatory Sacrifice, for the sins both of the dead and living; which proved a Stock for them to trade on, both for their ambition and covetousness, and from these evidences we may infer, how little of the humility of Christ appears in the Church, from the highest to the lowest.

The next branch of the Evangelical spirit, is Meekness and Charity, which leads me unto the consideration of the fourth Design of the Christian Religion, which was the uniting of Mankind under one Head, and into one Body; and this it designed to effectuate, not only by these sublime Precepts of the highest love, and the utmost extent of the pardoning of injuries, and of returning them with the best offices of love and prayer, which the blessed Author of our Faith did enact; but by the associating of the Faithful into one Society, called the *Church*, which was to be united with the closest bonds of brotherly love and charity; and was to be governed by Pastors and Teachers, who should feed the flock with the sincere milk of the Word; and was also to be cemented together by the Ligaments of the holy Sacraments, by which, as by joints and bands they are both united to their Head, and knit together. Now we are from these things to consider what opposition that Church we are now considering, gives to this branch of the end of Christianity.

And first, whereas the Gospel pronounceth us free, and that we are no more the servants of men, but of God, if any attempt upon that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, he changeth the authority of the Church into a tyrannical yoke; much more, if all the new articles of belief, and rules for practice, be imposed under the severest certificates. But here we are to consider, that all these things which that Church hath imposed on all of her communion, for which we withdrew from her, are additions to our faith; for in this we mainly differ from that Church, that whatever we acknowledg, they acknowledg likewise, but with a great many additions. We believe the Scriptures are a rule for Christians, and they believe the same; but they add Traditions, and the authority of the Church to the Scriptures. We believe that God is to be worshipped spiritually, they believe the same; but add, that he may be worshipped by Images and sensible Figures. We believe Christ to be the Mediator betwixt God and Man, they believe the same; but add to this the intercession of Saints. We hold that God and Christ are to be worshipped, they hold the same; but add Saints and Angels to their worship. We believe Heaven and Hell to be the several States of the future life, they believe the same; but add Purgatory betwixt them, to the day of Judgment. We believe Baptism and the Lords Supper to be the Sacraments of the new Covenant; they believe the same, but add five more. We believe Christ is spiritually and really present in the Lords Supper; this they believe, but add the unconceivable Tenent of his corporal presence. In a word, it might be instanced in many other particulars, how they have driven us from their Communion, by their additions to the truth and sincerity of the Gospel, which they have adulterated by their Inventions; and not only have they imposed all these things, but thundered out *Anathema's* on all that question them; and have so wreathed all their fopperies with that main and fundamental article of their belief, of the infallibility of their Church, that it is impossible to hope for their recovery, till they renounce that Principle which is so dear to them. For if their Church be infallible, then in no matter of faith or practice can she decree amiss; and therefore the lawfulness and sanctity of all her Decrees must be maintained with an equal vigor and zeal; for if in one of them she step aside, her infallibility is for ever gone. And by this we may see to how little purpose it is to treat of accomodating matters with that Church, since

since there is no possibility of our Union with them, without we
 turn over entirely to them. For they cannot part with one of
 their errors. A man may ask themselves that which is the source
 of them all, as well as the threatening authority of their Church.
 How could there be that Church, which assert the severe sanction
 of an Anathema to all the persons, even about the most tri-
 fling matters; and about things that are by their Confession, of
 their own nature indifferent? And a corollary to this is, that
 cruel opinion they hold, that none can be *saved out of their*
Communion; pretending there is no Salvation without the true
 Church, which they restrict to those who are under the obedi-
 ence of the *Roman Bishop*; and this is what they usually frighten
 all with.

But it is to be considered what the true notion of the Church is,
 that so we may see through this frightful Vizard. The Church
 then is, *a Society of Christians united in the same faith, for worship-
 ping of God jointly.* And another definition of a Church cannot
 be proved from Scripture; for the Church being called the Body
 of Christ, its union with him as its Head, is held forth by the Apo-
 stle in these words, *Col. 2. 19. The head Christ, from whom the
 whole body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and
 knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.* From which
 words we see what constitutes a man a member of the true
 Church; which is, first, his union to Christ as his head, together
 with a dependance on him for growth and nurture; and next,
 his being knit to all others who are thus united to Christ; which
 is first, the inward union of divine charity, by which he loves all
 who cleave to Christ as their Head; and next, his associating
 himself with them in outward visible acts of worship, which every
 Christian is bound to do, with all that worship God in Spirit and
 Truth. But if a Society of Christians do visibly swerve from
 Christ in many great and signal contradictions to the honour due
 to his Person, and to the obedience due to his Laws, and do grossly
 adulterate the worship, so that communion cannot be had with
 that Church, without departing from the Head Christ, then it can
 be no departing from the Church, to adhere to Christ and his true
 worship, and to separate from the corruptions which are brought
 in upon the Christian Religion. If then it appear, that the Church
 of *Rome* hath departed from the truth and simplicity of the Go-
 spel, in so many great and main points, those who attempted the re-

reforming her to her first Purity, and finding that not to be hoped for, did unite among themselves for serving and worshipping God aright, cannot be charged with separation from the true Church.

But by that cruel Tenent of theirs, they breed up all their Children in the greatest uncharitableness imaginable, condemning all who cannot believe their strange Doctrines, or concur in their unhallowed worship. Thus they are the Schismaticks who have departed from the true Church, and who force from their Communion all who adhere to it: but this cruelty rests not in uncharitable censures, but hath extended it self to as much bloody and barbarous rage, as ever sprung from Hell; for all the cruelty of the heathen Persecutors, cannot match the practises of that Whore that hath been so often *drunk with the blood of the Saints, and of the Martyrs of Jesus*. What enraged cruelty appeared against the poor *Waldenses*, for the separating from their Corruptions? How many of all Sexes and Ages, were cruelly butchered down by the procurement of the Rulers of that Church? and because the *Albigenses* lived under the protection of Princes that favoured them, how did the Popes depose their Princes, and instigate other ambitious invaders to seize on their dominions: Which to effectuate, a *Croissade* was proclaimed, that had been formerly practised against the Enemies of the Christian Faith, and Heaven was promised to such as went against these poor innocents, whereupon they were killed by thousands, without all mercy. Never was there any who had the zeal or honesty in these dark ages to witness against the apostacy of the Church, but the Pope and Clergy used all means to get his zeal rewarded with a Faggot. And when the time of Reformation came, with what rage and spite did the Pope, by his Letters and Legates instigate all the Princes of Europe to cruelty against them! But as these things were not done in corners, so they are still so fresh in our remembrance, by the copious accounts we have of them, that I need not tell what Arts the Popes and other Ecclesiasticks used, to set all *Germany* on fire upon this account: Nor need I tell the cruelty was exercised in the *Netherlands* in *Charles* the Fifth his time, in which more than an hundred thousand are said by *Grotius* to have been butchered on the account of Religion. And in his Son *Philip's* time, the D. of *Alva* did in a short time cut down Thirty six thousand. Nor need I tell the cruelties were practised

in *France* for about forty years together; nor of that treacherous *Massacre*, wherein there was an equal mixture of perfidy and cruelty, which for all that, was entertained at *Rome* with great joy and applauses. It will be also needless to tell of their cruelty in *England* in *Queen Mary's* days, which was chiefly managed by the Churchmen. And many are yet alive, who remember what enraged cruelty appeared in our Neighbour-Island against all of our Religion, which did not only flow from the fury of an oppressed People, but they were trained, encouraged, and warranted to it, by their Priests, and the *Nazarenes* who came afterwards among them, discovered who was the spring of all their motions. Shall I to this add all the private assassinations committed on that account, which were not only practised, but justified? I might here congest many instances, Brother murdering Brother on the account of Religion. Neither is *Clement* a *Dominican*, in murdering *Henry the third*, nor *Chastilets* attempt, nor *Ravillac's*, *assassin* in *Henry the fourth*, forgotten. *Q. Elizabeth's* life is full of these attempts, and the blackest of them all was, the *Gunpowder Treason*: All which are to be charged on that Church, because the Doctrine of murdering Heretick Princes was taught, licensed, printed, and yet not condemned in it. From these hints, we may guess how much of the lowly, meek, and charitable Spirit is to be found with them. But should I to this add the horrid cruelties exercised in these *Massacres*, I should be almost past belief, had I not undeniable Historians for verifying it; but the mildest of them being to be burned alive, we may guess what the more savage have done by their tortures and lingering Deaths. Next, shall I mention their *Courts of Inquisition* which have been among them in the hands of Churchmen, from the days of their pretended *Saint Dominick*, whose Order have been the great Instruments of the cruelties of that Church, and whose procedure being tied to no forms of equity, or justice, is as unjust as unmerciful, persons being haled to their black Courts, upon bare suspicions, or secret Informations, without leading of proofs against them, are by Torture examined, not only of their own opinions, but of all that are known to them; whose Testimony, tho drawn from them by cruel Torture, will bring the same Tortures on all they delate; neither is there any mercy for any whom this Court declares Heretick, but the Civil Magistrate must condemn them to the fire. Now what man that considers the meekness of Christ,

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and the Evangelical Spirit, can think that Church the Spouse of Christ, that hath rioted it with such savage rage, against thousands of persons, for no other crime, but because they adhered firmly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and would not consent or concur with these signal and palpable corruptions with which they have adulterated it.

But as from the constitution of their Church, we see their deformity from the Gospel-rule; so we will next consider their Church-men, and we shall find how far they have strayed from the first Original. Church-men ought to be the Guides and Pastors of Souls. Now, how little of this there is among them, we will soon be resolved in. What do the Popes about the feeding of Souls? When do they preach the Gospel? or dispense the Sacraments? Alas! it were below the height of *his Holiness* to stoop to such mean Offices. Does any vestige of a Church-man remain in that Court? and do they not directly rule in the Spirit of the *Lords of the Gentiles*? And in this the Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots, do, to their proportion, imitate their most *Holy Father*, abandoning wholly the work of the Gospel, as if they bore an empty title, or at most, were only bound to say Mass on some greater Holy-days; but in all other things do avowedly cast off the care of their Flocks. Shall I here tell of the relaxation of all the ancient rules, about the offices and duty of Church-men, which these latter ages have invented, and mention how children are made Bishops, how they allow of Pluralities, Non-residencies, Unions, Commendams, *Gratia expectativa's*, with a great many more corruptions, which are every day authorised and granted at Rome? and so zealous were they for these, that they struggled hard against the honest attempts of some at Trent, who would have had residence declared of Divine right, and got it, tho' with much ado to be laid aside. And thus it is that the Bishops and Abbots among them do for most part relinquish their Charges, to live at the Courts of Princes; and insinuate themselves upon all affairs and offices: And swarms of them go to Rome, gaping for preferment there. I deny not but even these late ages have produced great men among them, who seem to have designed the reviving of the Ancient Discipline, both among the Clergy and the People; but as these instances are rare, so they were hated and persecuted at Rome for their Zeal. Witness the condemning of *Arnolds Book of frequent Communion*, and the severity *Jansenius*,

and the *Abbot of St. Cyran, with their followers, have met with*: And thus whatever individuals that Church may have produced; yet the corruptions I have hinted, are notoriously, publicly, and generally practised in it, and no where so avowedly, as at the Court of *Rome*. But to compence this defect of the Superior Clergy, they have swarms of the inferior ranks every where, both secular and regular, who seem to mind the care of souls very seriously. But not to reflect again upon any thing hath been hitherto said of their bad conduct of souls, I shall now only take notice of the Authority they pretend to, as if the People were bound blindly to follow their Confessors direction, as the voice of God, which clearly makes them the servants of men, and subjects them to the heaviest yoke, which is most directly contrary to the *liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*: And what a rack to souls have they made Confession? and what an Engine to get into the secrets of all the World, and to bring mankind under their subjection, is obvious enough to any that considers it: And to enforce it the more, as they teach it simply necessary to Salvation, so the authority they made the World believe the Priests were vested with for pardoning sin, together with their easie Pardons, and slight Penances, did root it deep in the hearts of all of that Communion.

But I go next to examine the Sacraments, of which so much being said already, little remains to be added. By their dividing the Cup from the Bread, they destroy Christs Institution, and so make it no Sacrament; and the hearing of Mass without communicating, tho it make up the greatest part of their worship, yet is purely a service of their own devising, without warrant from Christs Institution, who said, *take eat, this is my Body*; thereby shewing, he intended the virtue and benefit of that Ordinance, only for those who received it. And in a word, let any read and compare the Institution of the Lords Supper, as it is in *the three Gospels, and the Epistle to the Corinthians*, together with the whole office of the Mass, as it is in the Roman Church, and then let him on his Conscience pass his verdict, whether they have adhered to, or departed from Christ's Institution in that piece of their worship. Finally, one great end of all solemn worship, being the Communion of Saints, in their joint adorations, and mutual concurrence in divine services, What union can they have with God? Or what communion can they hold one with ano-

ther, who perform all their Worship in an unknown Tongue, which is the rule and constant practice of that Church beyond Sea ; tho for the better venting of their sophisticated stuff among us, they give the people Books of devotion in their vulgar Language, yet continue to say the Office of the Mass in *Latin*.

And thus far I have run a round that great Circle I proposed to my self in the beginning of this Discourse : And have examined the chief Designs of the Christian Religion, and have found the great and evident contradictions, given to them in all their branches, by the established and authorised Doctrines and Practices of that Church ; in which I have fully justified the wise mans observation, that *he who increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow* ; and have said enough to evince to all rational and considering minds, how unsafe it is for any that would keep a good Conscience, to hold Communion with them. But I have not finished my design, till I likewise examine the Characters of the Christian Religion, and compare them with these that are to be found in the Synagogue of *Rome*.

The first Character of our Faith is, That it was delivered to the world by men sent of God, and divinely inspired, who proved their Mission by Miracles. Now these Doctrines about which we differ from that Church, can pretend to no such divine original : Let them tell us what inspired man did first teach the worship of Images, of the Mass, of Angels and Saints, and of Reliques ; What man sent of God was the first Author of the belief of the Corporal Presence, of the Sacrifice of the Mass, of the Pope's Supremacy, of Purgatory, of Indulgences, and of all these innumerable Superstitions, of which the Scripture is absolutely silent ; for if these Doctrines were not the off-spring of Revelations, they are none of the Oracles of God, nor can we be obliged to believe them as such. It is true, they vouch Scriptures for proof to some of these, but these are so far stretched, that their sure Retreat is in the Sanctuary of the Churches Traditions ; but till a clear Warrant be produced for proving it was impossible that any Falshood could have that way crept into the World, we must be excused from believing these. Neither is it possible to know what Traditions came from the Apostles, for as the Vulgar are not capable of pursuing the Enquiry, so the loss of most of the Writing of the first two Ages, makes it impossible to know what Traditions came from the Apostles.

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But this I say not, that we need fear the Trial ; for the silence of the first and purest Ages, about these things which are controverted among us, is evidence enough that they were not known to them ; especially, since in their Apologies which they wrote to the Heathens for their Religion and worship, wherein they give an abstract of their Doctrines, and a Rubrick of their Worship, they never once mention these great Evils, for which we now accuse that Church. It is true, a late ingenious Writer, whose sincere zeal and candor had much offended the *Roman* Court, and drawn censures on himself and his Book, took a way to repair his Reputation by a new Method of proving the truth of the Opinions held in the *Roman* Church ; which was, that since the present Church held them, that shews that they had them so from their Ancestors, and they from theirs, till you run backwards to the days of the Apostles ; alledging, that a change in the worship was unpracticable, since it could not be done in a corner, but in the view of all the World, who it is not to be imagined were capable of suffering any great or considerable change to be made in that which was daily in their view, and much in their esteem ; therefore he concludes, that every Generation adhered to that belief in which they were born, and so no change in any great substantial and visible part of worship could be made. It is true, he applies this only to the belief of the corporal Presence, which he attempts to prove could never have been introduced into the Church, had it not been conveyed down from the Apostles. He hath indeed set off this with all the beauties of wit, and elegancies of stile, and much profound reading. But with how great and eminent advantages, both of reason and learning, this pretence hath been baffled, I leave it to the judgment of all who have been so happy as to read Mr. *Claud* his incomparable Writings. And the common sense of mankind will prove this but an Imposture, how fairly soever adorned ; for if we find it certain, that any Doctrines, or main parts of Worship are now received into that Church, and if from the undeniable Evidences of History, and Writings of Ancients, it appear, that these things were not received in the ancient Church, then it is certain there hath been a change made from what was then, to what is now, though an ingenious Invention may make it appear very difficult to imagine how and when the change came in ; especially when it was insensibly, and by pieces advanced. If then it be proved,

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that

that the Fathers believed the Elements in the Sacrament were really Bread and Wine, and not changed from their own nature, but only Types and Figures of the Body of Christ, then we are sure a change must have been made, though the ignorance of some Ages makes it a hard task to clear all particulars about it. It is true, the Fathers did highly magnifie this Sacrament, with many Expressions, which (though the vehemence of Divine Rhetorick can well justify, yet) will not bear a Logical *Examen*; but when they speak in a cooler stile, nothing can be more clear, than that they believed not the corporal Presence. But may not that reasoning of the impossibility of a change in a worship, be as well applied to the taking the Chalice from the People, who in reason should be imagined so tenacious of so great a Priviledge, that no consideration should have obliged them to part with it? And yet we know, nor do they deny, how it was wrung from them about 250 years ago. What may seem less credible than for the People to consent, to have their worship in an unknown Tongue, and yet we know that all once worshipped in their Mother Tongue; but that after (by the overthrow of the *Roman* Empire) the Latin Tongue decayed, the barbarous worship was obtruded on the world? And what piece of worship is both more visible, and more contrary to the clearest Evidence of Scriptures, especially to the Commandments, in which the people were always instructed, than the worshipping of Images? And though we know well enough that for the first seven Centuries the Christian World abhorred them, yet within a hundred years after that, we find a great part of it bewitched with them. And what can be thought more uneasy for the world to have received, than the Popes absolute Authority over all the Churches and States of the world? One should think that though Religion and Reason had lien out of the way, yet Interest and Ambition had withstood this: Yet we see clearly by what steps they crept up, from being Bishops of the Imperial City, in an equality of power with their neighbouring Bishops, into that culminating height, to which they have now mounted. In a word, we refuse not to appeal to the first four Ages of the Church, in these matters that we quarrel the Roman Church for; We deny not but humane infirmity began soon to appear in the Church, and a care to gain on the Heathens, made them quickly fall upon some Rites, and use some terms, which after-ages corrupted. But the ruin of
Religion

Religion was when the Roman Empire being overturned by the invasion of the Northern Nations. In the beginning of the fifth Century, when Piety and Religion being laid to sleep, instead of the primitive simplicity of the faith and worship of the Christians, they turned all their zeal to the adorning of the outwards of Religion, and hence the corruptions of the Church took their rise.

But I had almost forgot to name some Revelations which that Church pretends to, even for some of her most doubtful opinions: Which are the Visions and extraordinary inspirations of some of their Saints, from which they vouch a divine confirmation to their Doctrines. I confess there is a great deal of extraordinary Visions, Raps and Ecstasies to be met with among the Lives of their Saints; and I fear a great deal more than truth: For really who so will but read these writings, he must confess they are so far from being probable, or well contrived, that they speak out their forgery. Alas! whereas St. Paul being put to glory, of Visions and Revelations, was to run back fourteen years for one; their Saints are found in them every day. Are they not very credible Stories they will tell of Christ's appearing to some of their She Saints, and kissing them, giving them Rings, being married to them, and celebrating nuptial Rites, making them drink out of his side, and leaving on them the prints of his wounds, with many other such like apparitions of the Virgin, and other Saints, which were either forgeries, dreams, or the effects of melancholly, or hysterical distempers; and yet these extravagant Fables are given out to the people, as sacred pieces of Divine Revelations.

But the inspiration of the holy Writers, on which we found our Faith, was proved by their Miracles which they wrought publicly in the sight of many, and in the presence of their Adversaries, many of whom were convinced by them; and it is certain, that who-soever offers any thing to anothers belief, pretending he comes to him in the Name of God, must have some evident proof of his Divine Mission, since none are bound to believe him barely on his own testimony, otherwise there should be no end of Impostures, if every pretender to Divine Inspiration were to be believed without proof. Now the way it must be proved is, by some evidence of God's extraordinary assisting such a person, which appeared always either in Prophecies or Miracles, but chiefly in Miracles under the New-Testament; and therefore both Christ and his Apostles appeal to the mighty works they wrought, as the great confirmation of their
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their Doctrine. If then there be new Doctrines brought into the Church, they must have the like confirmation, otherwise they are not to be believed.

But here those of that Church think they triumph; for Miracles they have in abundance; not a Relique they have, but hath wrought mighty wonders; nor a Countrey-Saint, but the Curate of the place can gravely tell a great many deeds of his Puissance; nor want the Images their marvellous Achievements; but wondrously wondrous are the Feats the Hofty hath performed. Here I am upon a sad subject of that trade of lies and fictions, wherewith the *Merchants of that Babylon have so long traffiqued*, of which the sincerer among themselves are ashamed. How ridiculous are many of their miraculous Narrations? Was it a worthy piece of the Angelical Ministration, for Angels to go trotting over Sea and Land with a Load of Timber and Stones of the *Virgins House*, till at length they set it down at *Loretto*, that great Devotions might be shown to it? It is a goodly story for to tell of a Saint that walked so far after his Head was cut off, with it in his Arms, resting in some places to draw breath; yet he will pass for an Infidel that should doubt of this at *St. Denis-Church*. Who can look on the Lives of the late Saints of that Church without nausea? *Gregories Dialogues* begun this trade, which indeed hath thriven well since. The Miracles of the Christian Faith were grave and solemn actions; but what ridiculous scenical stories, not to say blasphemous ones, meet us about the Miracles of their Saints? He that would know this, may read the Lives of *St. Francis*, and *St. Dominic*, *St. Bridget*, and the two *St. Gutherines*, and he will be satisfied to a surfeit. The Miracles also of Christ and his Apostles were acted publickly, in the view of all; but most of these Narrations of their Wonders were transacted in corners, none being witnesses but persons concerned to own the Cheat: And the Doctrine of Equivocating was a good Cordial for the ease of their Consciences, though they swore what they knew false, according to the natural sense of the words which they uttered. Thus we have many Fables of Christs appearing in the Hofty, sometimes as a Child, and sometimes as crucified, when but a very few of the whole company present, were honoured with that amazing sight.

Further, The Miracles of the Christian Faith were written in the times in which they were acted, that so enquiries might have

been made into their Falshood; and the Powers that then governed, being enemies to the Faith, it was safe for its opposers to have proved and discovered their Forgery, had any such been. But many of the Miracles of *Rome* are not heard of, till some Ages, at least Years, be past, whereby they are secure from the after game of a discovery; and he were a stout man that would adventure to question the verity of these pretences at *Rome*, where it is the interest of that Church to have them all believed, without once questioning them. But how comes it, that in Heretical Countries (as they call them) where there is more need of those Miracles, and where they might be more irrefragably proved, if true, since the Examiners of them were not to be suspected, yet *none of these mighty works do shew themselves forth*? Certainly, that they are to this day so rise in *Italy* and *Spain*, and so scant in *Britain*, is a shrewd ground to apprehend *Legerdemain*, and forgery, in the accounts we get of their later Saints. And indeed the Contrivers of these Stories have not managed their design by half, so well as need was; for they have bestowed as many of them on one person, as might have Sainted the half of an Order. But the gain that is made by new Saints, and new Reliques, is well enough known; not to speak of the general advantage that Church pretends to draw from it.

In end, tho some things among them did seem to surpass the known powers of Nature, these ought not to prevail upon us for departing from the truth; *since though an Angel from Heaven Preached another Gospel, he is to be accursed*, Gal. 1. 8. If then they have so changed the Christian Doctrine by their Additions and Inventions, that it is become thereby as another Gospel; none of the seemingly Seraphical Appearances they may have among them, tho true, ought to reconcile us to it; and that the rather, since we were expressly guarded against this Imposture, by St. Paul, who gave it as an Indication of the Son of Perdition, that his coming was after the power of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, 2 Thess. 2. 9, 10. And it is a part of their curse, that they are given up to strong delusions, to believe lies: the Beast also that appeared to St. John, Rev. 13. 13. did great wonders, so that he made Fire come down from Heaven, in the sight of men, and deceived many that dwell on the Earth, by these Miracles which he had power to do. But to conclude this, my greatest quarrel at these forgeries of Miracles is, that the People being taught

taught to believe them, and the Miracles of the Gospel, with an equal certainty, since they have the Testimony of the Church for both ; and they seeing such evident Characters of fraud and forgery on these supposed Miracles, whereby they are convinced of their falshood, are thereby in danger of suspecting all the Miracles of the Gospel, as the tricks of subdolous and crafty men ; whereby they run head-long to an Atheistical disbelieving the truth of all alike. And thus far we have found how opposite that Church is, to the Spouse of Christ, since her Doctrines are so ill founded, and look so like cunningly devised Fables, without the authority of Divine Inspiration, or the proof of true Miracles.

The next Character of our Faith is, its perspicuity, and simplicity, all being called to the clear light of the day in it, and every part of it being so genuine, that it is apparent, it was not the contrivance of designing men, that by the belief of it they might obtain the power, and possess the riches of the World : And therefore there are no secret Doctrines in our Faith, which must be kept up from the Vulgar, whereby the Pastors of Christendom may have dominion over their Souls. But what must we conclude of them, who by all means study to keep all of their Communion ignorant, as if Devotion were thereby nourished ; and allow them not the use of the Scriptures in their Mother-tongue, nor a worship which they can understand, whereby it is, that they who *occupy the room of unlearned, cannot say Amen ; at the giving of thanks, since they understand not what is said.* To this might be added their implicite Faith, to all the Doctrines of the Church, without further inquiries ; and their blind obedience to the *Confessarius*, be he never so ignorant and carnal. These are certainly darkening opinions and practises, and far different from the methods of the Apostles, in preaching the Gospel, who withheld from the People nothing of the Counsel of God, and studied the enlightening their understandings, as well as the enlivening of their wills.

But further, how much of interest appears in the Doctrines of *Rome*, which tend to the exalting or enriching the Papacy, and inferior Clergy ; for it is visible what a trade they drive by them, and all the contrivances, all the projectors in *Europe* ever sell upon for enriching their Master's Treasury, falls short of the projects of Purgatory, the Treasure of the Church, Indulgences, and the Pope's absolute authority, in making, abrogating, and dispensing with all Positive Laws. Neither is there more of design to be found

in the *Alcoran*, than in the Mysteries of that *Caliph* of the *Spiritual Babylon*. And we may guess of their concernedness in these matters, since a gentler censure may be hoped for upon the violation of the greatest of the Laws of God, than upon the least contradiction to their idolized Interest. The one is the constant subject of their Studies, and Sermons, whereas the other is seldom minded.

The third Character of our Faith, is, that it is rational and suitable to our Souls, God having fitted it, and framed them so harmoniously, that they are congenial one to another. It is true, the Mysteries about God and Christ are exalted above the reach of our faculties, but even reason it self teacheth that it must be so, since if there be a God, he must be infinite and incomprehensible; and therefore it is not to be wondered, if the Scriptures offer some Mysteries to us about God and Christ, which choke and stifle the impressions we are apt to take of things. But in these, it is visible, that the Object is so disproportioned to our faculties, that it is impossible we can reach or comprehend it; but as for the other parts of Religion, they are all so distinctly plain, that the reasonableness, as well as the authority of them, serve to commend them to us; but how void are they of this, who have made one of the chief Articles of their Faith, and the greatest matter of their Worship, that which is, not only beyond, but contrary to, the most common impressions of Nature, which teacheth us to believe our Senses when under no lesion, and duly applied to a proper object. For indeed, in that case, we cannot really doubt but things are as they appear to us; for we cannot believe it mid-night, when we clearly see the Sun in the Meridian; nay, and our Faith rests on the evidences our Senses give, since we believe, because Miracles were clearly seen by these who first received the Faith: And, *Christ said, believe me, for the very works sake*, John 14. 11. And so their sight of these Works was a certain ground for their belief, therefore the Senses unvitiated, fixing on a proper object, through a due mean, are infallible; therefore what our sight, our taste, and our touch, tell us, is Bread and Wine, must be so still, and cannot be imagined to have changed its substance, upon the recital of the five words. Shall I add to this, that throng of absurdities which crowd about this opinion? For if it be true, then a body may be in more places at once, triumphing in glory in one, and sacrificed in a thousand other places: And a large body may be crouded into
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the narrow space of a thin Wafer, they holding it to be not only wholly in the whole Wafer, but also intirely in every crumb of it : A body can be without dimensions, and accidents without a subject ; these must be confessed to be among the highest of unconceivables ; and yet these Miracles must be believed to be produced every day, in above a hundred thousand places. Certainly, he hath a sturdy belief, who can swallow over all these absurdities without choaking on them.

It is little less unconceivable to imagine, that a man of no eximious sanctity (nay, perhaps of noted impiety) nor extraordinarily knowing (nay, perhaps grossly ignorant) in Theological Matters, shall have the Holy Ghost so absolutely at his command, that whatever he decrees, must be the Dictates of the Spirit. And what an unconceivable mystery is the Treasure of the Church, and the Popes Authority to dispence it as he will ? No less conceivable is the efficacy of the Sacraments, by the work wrought ; nor is any thing more affronting to reason, than the barbarous worship. And of a piece with this is the blind subjection pleaded for the *Confessarins* his Injunctions, and their opinions of expiating their sins by a company of little trifling penances, which tend not to the cleansing the Soul, nor killing of the life of Sin, much less can be able to appease God, either of their own inbred worth, or by reason of any value God is pleased to set on them, either by Command or Promise. But should I reckon up every thing is among them that choaks reason, I should dwell too long on this, and reckon over most of the things have been through the whole Discourse hinted, which seem to stand in the most diametrical opposition to the clearest impressions of all mens reasons.

But to bring my Enquiry to an issue, Easiness and gentleness are by Christ applied to his yoke, laws, and burden ; and whatever opposition or trouble they may give to the carnal man, by mortifying his lusts, and contradicting all his inordinate and unlimited desires, yet by the rational faculties and powers they are both easily understood and practised. Indeed Religion lies in few things, and its chief work is the reforming and purifying the inward man, where it mainly dwells and exerts its force and virtue ; but these who have added so much, both to be believed and done, beyond what our Lord prescribed, as they accuse his unfaithfulness, so bring unsupportable burdens on the Consciences
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of Christians : These therefore who lead out the mind, by presenting a great many foreign objects to it, do introduce superannuated Judaism, instead of that liberty Christ brought with him unto the World. But shall I number up here all the Impositions of that Church, whose numbers are great as well as their nature grievous ; for it is a study to know them all : But what a pain must it be to perform them ? It is a work which will take up a great deal of time to understand the *Rubricks of their Missals, Breviaries, Rituals, and Pontificals*. In a word, they have lost the purity and simplicity of Religion, and set up instead of it a lifeless heap of Ordinances, which must oppress, but cannot relieve the Consciences of their Disciples.

Shall I add to this, the severity of some of their Orders, into which by unalterable Vows they are engaged their whole lives ? Now whatever fitness might be in such Discipline, upon occasions, for beating down the body, or humbling of the mind, yet it must be very tyrannical to bind the perpetual observance of these on any by an Oath ; for thereby all the rest of their lives may become insupportably bitter to them, wherein they stand obliged, under perjury, to the perpetual observance of some severe Discipline ; which, tho at first in a novitious fervour, might have had its good effects on them ; yet that drying up, it will afterwards have no other effect but the constant dejecting of the soul, and so their life will be a rack to them by their perpetual toil in these austerities. This I speak of those who seem the chief Ornaments of that Church, whose Devotion doth for most part turn to outwards, and rests in the strict observance of their rules, not without voluntary assumed mortifications, which they add to them, but wherein they for most part glory, and so the life of pride and self-love (the subtillest of all our enemies) is fed and nourished by them : Neither can we think that these, whose exercises are so much external, can be so recollected for the inward and serene breathings of the Mind after God and Christ, without which all externals, tho they seem to make a *fair shew in the flesh*, yet are but a skelet of lifeless and insipid things. But indeed they have studied to remove this objection of the uneasiness of their Religion, by accommodating it so, that the worst of men may be secure of Heaven, and enjoy their lusts both, according to the corrupt conduct of some of their spiritual Fathers : But what I have hinted of the uneasiness of their Religion, is taken from the
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the Nature of their Devotions, in their highest altitude and elevation.

And thus far I have pursued my Design, in the tract whereof I have not been void of a great deal of pain and sorrow; For what pleasure can any find by discovering so much wickedness, and so many errors in the Christened Regions of the World; and see the holy and beautiful Places, wherein the former Ages worshipped God in the Spirit, turned to be habitations of Idols and graven Images, by which God is provoked to jealousy. God is my witness, how these thoughts have entertained me with horror and regret all the while I have considered them: And that I am so far from being glad that I have found so much corruption in the *Roman Church*, that it is not without the greatest antipathy to my nature, imaginable, that I have payed this duty to truth, by asserting it with the discovery of so many Impositions, which have so long abused the Christian world; and if any heat or warmth hath slipped from my Pen, I must protest sincerely, it is not the effect of anger or passion, but of a tender and zealous compassion, for those souls who are either already blinded with these delusions, or do incline towards *those paths which lead to the chambers of death*.

I am none of those who justify rage or bitterness against those in errors; for if we had the the Spirit of Christ in us, we should mourn over, and lament their misery, who lie under so much darkness. And this is a sure character to judge if our zeal for God and his truth be Divine and Evangelical, if it make us pour out Rivers of tears for those that have gone out of the way, rather than streams of fire against them. That Zeal which raiseth melting sorrow, tender compassion, and fervent prayers for those we see erring, is Christ-like, and worthy of that meek and charitable spirit which the Gospel so much recommends: Whereas that which boils out in rage and foam against such as err, and designs their ruin and mischief, and studies how to persecute, rather than convert them, and kindles in men a bitter aversion to their persons, together with rude harshness in their behaviour to them, is all Antichristian and carnal. My design therefore in this discourse is to provoke pity rather than wrath, and tears more than flames, towards those deceived multitudes, that we may pray for them, rather than rail at them.

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But my chief aim is to persuade all who love their souls, to consider the danger of continuing in the Communion of a Church, that hath not only fallen from her first love and purity, but hath in so many great and essential points corrupted our most holy Faith, and annihilated the pure sincerity of our worship.

I shall not here search into the depths of the Mercies of God, how far they may reach any of that Communion, nor examine how far they hold the Foundation Christ, notwithstanding of all the base superstructures they have reared upon it; nor shall I consider how far invincible ignorance may excuse the guilt of an Error, nor how applicable this may be to them; nor shall I discuss how far the private differing from these Errors may in many things secure some of the individuals of that Communion from the general guilt that lies over them; upon all these particulars many things may be said, and none alive is more willing to stretch his livernion, for finding out grounds to fix his Charity on, than my self. But all I can devise falls short of a full and satisfying excuse for those who being educated in the knowledge of the truth and sincerity of the Gospel, do fall away into the Errors and Superstitions of that Church; nor can I imagine what their temptations should be to it, except one of two: The first is, that they desire a sensible Religion, and therefore loath the simplicity and spirituality of the Gospel, and love to have some glorious objects in Worship to strike on, and affect their senses: But however this may make impressions on the grosser Rabble, yet certainly, any that considers that the perfection of man lies in his Reason, and not in his outward senses, and that the exaltation of Reason is Religion; he must confess that the less it dwell in the senses, and the more inward it become on the reason, it is the more suitable both to the Nature of God, of Religion, and of the rational Faculties. But the other consideration that may draw many to that Religion, is yet worse, which is, because in it a great allowance is given to all manner of sin, by the treacherous conduct of some Confessors, who persuade men of Heaven, on terms very easie and pleasing to Flesh and Blood. And hence it is that we see very few who have expressed any affection to a devout life, abandoning us to go over to the *Roman Communion*, most of those who do so (except it be one of a thousand) being as void of vertue, as ignorant of the nature of true Religion; that we may say, Joh. 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they*

they were not of us ; for if they had been of us, they had not gone out from us.

These being the only visible tentations to entice any from our Communion to theirs, it is hard to preserve any great degrees of Charity for them : For a third tentation being that only which can work on a devout mind, takes with so few among us, that I need scarce name it, which is the solitary and retired houses among them for leading a devout and strict life, and the excellent Books of Devotion have been published by many of that Communion. This I know wrought mightily on one, and made him many times wish that he could with a good Conscience throw himself into one of these Religious Houses ; but the consideration of these great Corruptions lay so in his way, that without the doing the greatest force on his Conscience imaginable, and thereby securing damnation to himself by complying with things he judged so damnable, he durst not do it. Yet for his further satisfaction, he went among them, to see if their Worship appeared more amiable in practise, than it did in Writings ; but I have heard him often declare, that though his mind was as free of prepossessions, as perhaps ever man's was, yet all he conceived of them, even from the Writings of their Adversaries, was nothing compared to the impressions which the sight of their Worship left upon him, it appearing so Histrionical in all its circumstances, and so idolatrous in its substance, especially as he saw the vulgar practise it. And for their Religious Houses, he was among a great many of all Orders, but was far from meeting with that spirit of devotion he had hoped to find among them, for they always magnified their Order, and the little external Austerities and Devotions of it ; but for genuine humility, a delight in God, and Christ, abstraction from the World, (for all their frocks and retirements) sincere heavenly-mindedness, and fervent Charity to the Brethren, he regretted he had met with little of it among them. And that he found the several Orders full of emulation and envy at other Orders, and of heats among themselves, which made him see, that he who meant to lead a devout life, must chuse another Sanctuary than any of these he saw in that Communion.

I deny not, that it is the greatest defect of the Reformation, that there are not in it such encouragements to a devout life ; though the intanglements of Vows to things without our power, is a manifest invasion of the Christian liberty ; and to languish out ones

life in a tract of lazy Devotion, without studying to serve God in our Generation, seems contrary to the intendment of Religion, a great many of its Precepts being about those Duties we owe our Neighbours: Yet for all this, it is not to be denied to be a great defect that we want reclusel-Houses, for a stricter training up of those who design to lead a spiritual life, and to serve in the Gospel, that their minds being rightly formed before their first setting out, they may be well qualified and furnished for their work. Such Houses might also be retreating places for old Persons, after they had served their Generation, and were no more able to undergo toil and fatigue; they might be also Sanctuaries for devout Persons, in times of their greater afflictions or devotions. But for all this want, it fixeth no imputation on our Church, her Doctrine, or Worship, that she is so poor, as not to be able to maintain such Seminaries. But on the way, it is no great character of the Piety of their Church, that she abounds so with great and rich donations, when we consider the Arts they used for acquiring them, by making People believe themselves secure of Heaven by such donations: Indeed, had we got our People befooled into such persuasions, the cheat might have prospered as well in our hands; but we are not of those, *who handle the Word of God deceitfully*; nor will we draw the People even to do good with a crafty guile, or lye for God.

But now, as a conclusion to this Discourse, I must consider, if all things among us be so sound and well grounded, that with a quiet Mind and good Conscience every one may hold Communion with our Church, and hope for Salvation in it, I shall therefore briefly run over the Nature and Characters of the Christian Faith, to see if any contradiction to them, or any part of them, be found among us. And first of all, we worship God in Spirit, as a Spiritual Being, with suitable Adorations, which we direct to no Image nor Symbol of the Divine Presence, but teach, that we ought not to figure God to any corporeal being, no not in our thoughts; neither do we worship any, beside God the Father, Son, and Spirit: We also worship Christ, but as he is God, and hath the fulness of the God-head dwelling in him bodily: Angels indeed we honour, but knowing them to be our fellow-servants, we cannot pray to them, or fall down before them: We count the holy Virgin *blessed among women*, but dare give her no share of the glory due to her Son: All the Saints we re-
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rence and love, but knowing God to be a *jealous God*, we cannot divide that honour among them, which is only due to him, and therefore do neither worship them, their Images, nor their Reliques. We desire also to offer up to God such Sacrifices as we know are well-pleasing to him, *Prayers, Praises, broken and contrite Hearts, and our Souls and Bodies*, but reject all Charms and Enchantments from our Worship, as contrary to the *reasonable service which is acceptable to God*, and do retain the genuine simplicity of the Gospel-worship, in a plain and intelligible stile and form, without any mixtures drawn from Judaism or Gentilism : And thus there is nothing among us contrary to the first design of Religion.

And as little will be found against the second, which is the honour due to Christ in all his Offices : We teach our People to study the Scriptures, and to examine all we say by them, and exhort them to depend on God, who by his Spirit will teach them as well as us ; neither do we pretend to an authority over their Consciences, but acknowledg our selves men of like infirmities with the People, who are all called to be a *Royal Priesthood* ; and thus we honour Christ's Prophetical Office, by founding our Faith only on the Divine Authority of the Scriptures. *We also believe, there is no Name given under Heaven by which we can be saved, but the Name of Christ, who laid down his Life a ransom for our Souls, that by his Cross we might be reconciled to God ;* and it is to that one Sacrifice, that we teach all to fly for obtaining remission of sins, and the favour of God, trusting only to it, and to nothing we have done or can do ; knowing that when we have done all we can do, *we are but unprofitable servants* ; much less do we hope for any thing from any of our Fellow-creatures : We apply our Souls to no Intercessor but Christ, and trust to no Satisfaction but his, and we acknowledg him the only King of his Church, whose Laws must bind it to the end of the World. Neither do we acknowledg any other Authority, but his, over our Consciences. It is true, in things indifferent, he hath left a power with his Church to determine in those Matters, which may tend to advance order, edification, peace and decency ; but as the Church cannot add to our Faith, so neither can it institute new pieces of Worship, which shall commend us to God, or bind any load upon our Souls. We own a Ministerial Authority in all the Pastors of the Church, which they derive from Jesus Christ, and not from any

visible Head on Earth, and therefore they are only subject to Christ. We also hold, that the Civil Powers are of Christ, whose Gospel binds the duty of obedience to them more closely on us; and therefore if they do wrong, we leave them to Christ's Tribunal, who set them up, but pretend to no power from his Gospel to coerce or resist them; and thus we honour Christ in all his Offices, and so are conform to the second branch of the design of our Faith.

We also receive the third with the same fidelity; and whatever the practices of too too many among us be, yet there is no ground to quarrel our Doctrine; we preach repentance to all, and study to convince them of their misery, and lost estate, that they may mourn for their sins, and turn to God by a new course of life; we preach Faith through Christ in God, as that which unites our souls to him, by which we are in Christ, and Christ is in us. We stir up our people to love the Lord their God with all their heart, strength, soul and mind, and to wait for his Son Christ Jesus, who is the hope of glory, and shall change our vile bodies into the likeness of his glorious Body. And from this great motive do we press our people to the study of holiness, without which they shall never see God. We send them to the ten Commandments for the rule of their lives, whose exposition we chiefly take from Christ's Sermon on the Mount; neither can we be charged for having taught the People, to break one of the least of these Commandments. We exhort all our hearers to make the life of Christ the pattern of theirs, and to learn of him who was meek and lowly in heart; neither can our Church be accused of having taught any Carnal Doctrines, for gratifying the base Interests of the flesh, or for ingrossing the power or treasure of the World, the subsistence of our Church-men being but a livelihood, and not a treasure. In a word, we preach Christ and him Crucified, and all the rules of his Gospel, for ordering the conversation aright, without adding, or taking from it; and thus our conformity to the third branch of Christianity appears.

We teach also according to the fourth branch of Christianity, the Doctrines of Charity; neither do we condemn any who hold the foundation, though in some lesser matters they differ from us; but hope they may be saved as well as we. We abhor the Doctrine of cruel persecuting of any for their Consciences: The utmost we allow of, or desire of that nature, being the preservation